

PERIODICAL ROOM  
JAN 23 1929  
\$1.00 A COPY

JAN 23 1929

\$6.00 A YEAR

# ART IN AMERICA *AND ELSEWHERE*

AN ILLUSTRATED BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

VOLUME  
17

FEBRUARY, 1929

NUMBER  
2

EDITED BY  
DR. W. R. VALENTINER  
AND  
FREDERIC FAIRCHILD SHERMAN

## CONTENTS

A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY JAMMŪ  
PAINTING OF DURGA

By Alvan C. Eastman



ITALO-BYZANTINE PANELS AT BOLOGNA

By Evelyn Sandberg Vavala



DUTCH GENRE PAINTERS IN THE MAN-  
NER OF PIETER DE HOOCH

PART TWO. JACOBUS VREL

By W. R. Valentiner



STUDIES ON GIUSEPPE MARIA CRESPI

PART TWO

By Victor Lasareff



GEORGE BELLOWES

By Walter Gutman

PUBLISHED AT

105 MIDDLE STREET, PORTLAND, MAINE, AND  
578 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

ENTERED AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER OCTOBER 4, 1923, AT THE POST OFFICE AT PORTLAND, MAINE,  
UNDER THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879 . . . PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

# DUVEEN BROTHERS

---

OBJETS D'ART  
PAINTINGS  
PORCELAINS  
TAPESTRIES

---

NEW YORK

PARIS

*Readers are requested to mention ART IN AMERICA in communicating with advertisers*







DURGĀ SLAYING AN ASURA. (PAHĀRĪ, JAMMŪ)  
*Detroit Institute of Arts*



ART IN AMERICA *AND ELSEWHERE*  
AN ILLUSTRATED BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE  
VOLUME XVII • NUMBER 2 • FEBRUARY 1929



A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY JAMMŪ PAINTING  
OF DURGĀ

BY ALVAN C. EASTMAN  
*Detroit, Michigan*

THERE is an Indian painting in the Detroit Institute of Arts the subject of which, to many strange, is apt to focus attention on its arresting quality and which may miss its aesthetic appeal. And yet this painting has a compelling beauty and an air of true grandeur. We refer to the "Durgā slaying an Asura," a painting of the Rājput, Jammū school, of the Panjab Himalayas, painted in the middle of the seventeenth century.

The subject is an illustration for the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, and represents one of the exploits of its heroine, the goddess Durgā in her constant battle with the powers of evil, symbolized in monster demons, known as asuras.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The only Purāṇa which is, as such, commonly illustrated in Rājput (pahari) painting is the Mārkaṇḍeya." A. K. Coomaraswamy. Catalogue of the Indian collections in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Part V, Rājput Painting, page 49.

Copyright, 1929, by Frederic F. Sherman

In brief the narrative describes the conflict between Brahmanical deities and the asuras which sought to rob them of the sovereignty of the heavens. The gods were at first defeated, but their combined energies became manifest in the goddess Durgā, who proceeded to assault and defeat the demons, regaining the sovereignty of the heavens, the gods celebrating her victories in hymns, she in turn promising them eternal friendship.<sup>2</sup> In this connection it should be understood that Brahmanical deities could appear in various manifestations, one and the same deity being recognizable under different names. Thus Durgā, a manifestation of the destructive powers of the mother-goddess Mahā-Devī (formed from the energies of the male deities of Brahmanism), is generally regarded as the feminine aspect or energy of Śiva. She is also regarded as the consort of Brahmā and Vishnu. "Philosophically, the consort represents the female power or energy by which the male god works upon and in the world." Sakta cults or the glorification of the feminine principle had an especial prominence in the Panjab in the seventeenth century. Hence there are a variety of paintings illustrating the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa — the Durgā cult becoming prominent in the Kāṅgrā and Jammū states in this and the following century.<sup>3</sup>

Durgā — the destroyer — is, of course, the tāmasik manifest of the Mahā-Devī.<sup>4</sup> Hence, her portrayal as a warrioress with eighteen arms (though the number may be less). She is represented seated and enthroned on a large lotus flower, resting on a pinnacle-shaped cliff, and in attack, all but one of her arms (which draws the arrow aimed at the asura in the valley) extended full length from her body, forming radii of a circle. Excepting the two holding attributes of conch and skull cup, fourteen of her hands are brandishing weapons. The more recognizable among these are the sword, scimitar, spear, shield, double-headed javelin, the axe, an elephant goad, and a discus. Besides these she carries a lasso and a quiver filled with arrows at the other side of her waist.

The demon rises upright from the plain, surrounded by fiery tongues of flame, outlined in gold, and steam curling around his body in large spirals. The asura has a somewhat elephant shaped head with horns tipped with gold; the jaw is large and open with tongue curling upward showing a row of teeth. The body is round and massive, the arm human-

<sup>2</sup> This account is more fully described in same publication, page 50.

<sup>3</sup> See Kāṅgrā drawings of the Mārkaṇḍeya; same, ill. plate LXII.

<sup>4</sup> Catalogue of the Indian collections, Part I, page 37, A. K. Coomaraswamy.

shaped with hand upraised in attitude of defense. The identification of the asura is undetermined. But we may be certain it is one of the "generals" of the demon army, else the body would be without jewels. One is tempted to designate him as Mahisa, the chief of the asuras, but this is precluded by the fact, the head is not that of a bull. A lyric and poetical touch is added by representing tufts of grass and small stalks of delicate flowers in the lower margin of the picture.

Stylistically this painting has many qualities of a mural: a directness, a sense of spaciousness, a true grandeur, a well-balanced design with broad areas of single glowing colors, and a contrast which though often startling is never incongruous. The draughtsmanship is precise although not as sensitive as that of the Kāṅgrā school. These characteristics, especially dominance of glowing color, are in fact typical of early Jammū painting.

These qualities are apparent in the arrangement of colors: there is concentration on a few glowing tones; a regard for sharp contrast and a satisfactory balance. Durgā is portrayed in a clear, slightly reddish flesh tone on the nude portions of her body; her skirt is a pure, deep crimson tone, laid over twice with fine lines where the folds of the garments are indicated. As against this are opposed the two contrasts — the white petals tipped with pink of the lotus flower and the dark leaden grey of the rock cliff. The only other large area of color, and it is the largest in the painting, is a glowing orange indicating space, opposed to the blue-grey color of the asura. The number, including shades of color, is eleven: orange, dark grey, silver, buff, rose red, blue, gold white, green and blue-grey. In general, however, the painting is based upon a blue, red and yellow color scheme. The total effect is at once forceful and arresting. Such careful regard is retained for the organization of tones and their unity, that striking as they are, the painting is never out of key.

The medium used is a water color pigment mixed with a kind of starch paste for binder so that the technique may be likened to tempera or fresco upon a paper surface, several sheets being glued together, making the surface slightly stiffened like a board.<sup>5</sup>

In this, as in all Indian painting, distance and western perspective, or the theory that parallel lines converge at a vanishing point and objects must decrease in size the further they retreat from the eye, are not employed. An entirely different convention is used, but totally ade-

<sup>5</sup> Catalogue of the Indian collections, Rājput Painting, page 20.



quate to the art. What is often called "vertical projection" more definitely expressed perhaps as the "recession of objects on an ascending plane" is the method used to represent height. The mountainous cliffs are an instance in the picture. This is also the convention in Persian and Chinese art. Although there is no linear method of representing distance one is nevertheless aware of a surrounding spaciousness. In this connection one sees that the asura in the valley is of the same size comparatively speaking as Durgā on the mountain cliff. Dominance of the theme, or the conflict of forces, is the essential thing here. That the spacial relationships are violated is beside the point. One will also observe that the figures are represented in profile. With but few exceptions this is also a type convention.<sup>6</sup>

As to the origin of the Jammū school, information is still too fragmentary in the history of Indian painting to determine it exactly. We know that the earliest Pahārī paintings are dateable around 1600 and that the Jammū school itself represents "the oldest and most peculiar type of Pahārī art and the continuation of some older tradition." A suggestion that has been accepted and that probably comes near the mark, is that Pahārī painting was "separated from the school of the ancient west at an early date and evolved somewhere between the Pala and Jaina miniature styles and perhaps near to that of the Vesanta Villasa manuscript."<sup>7</sup> Interesting analogies may be made between the colors used in the Detroit painting and two leaves from a Jaina manuscript (of the fifteenth century), also in the same collection, but again evidence is too incomplete to admit of definite conclusions. Generally speaking Rājput painting may be said to have its antecedents in the frescoes of Ajanta. But from the ninth century until 1600, excepting for the Kalpa Sūtra manuscripts of the Jains, dateable in the fifteenth century,<sup>8a</sup> and the Vesanta Vilāsa, a Gujurātī work and poem, dated 1451,<sup>9</sup> there is a long gap and no trace of Indian painting is to be found.

Finally there are the interesting subjects of ornament and costume and the problem of dating. Apart from the evidence of style by which

<sup>6</sup> Catalogue of the Indian collections, Rājput Painting, page 22.

<sup>7</sup> Same, page 7.

<sup>8</sup> Same, page 7. A suggestion made by Dr. Goetz in correspondence with Dr. Coomaraswamy.

<sup>8a</sup> A single illustrated Kalpa Sūtra on palm leaf dated equivalent to 1237 exists. Catalogue of the Indian Collections in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Part IV, Jaina Painting; Page 30, 32. A. K. Coomaraswamy. There also exists some Nepalese palm leaf manuscripts dateable as early as the eleventh century which reflect the style though cannot be considered as strictly Indian as the Rala and Gujarati schools. See History of Indian and Indonesian art, pg. 146. A. K. Coomaraswamy.

<sup>9</sup> See Plate LXXXI, fig. 257, "History Indian and Indonesian Art." A. K. Coomaraswamy.

most Indian painting can be dated within a century, there are accessories like costume and especially like jewelry, owing to change in vogues that the artist seldom failed to record, making it often possible to date a picture within a quarter of a century.

On the evidence of other ornaments and jewelry, we date our painting the second quarter of the seventeenth century. The earrings, one may note, have a jeweled pendant attached — a fashion which was first in vogue in the middle of the seventeenth century when black pompons seen attached as ornaments to the bracelets and waist were going out of style. Pompons make their first appearance in painting in India in the late sixteenth century when they were of large size. They begin to disappear the middle of the seventeenth, and are absent in early years of the eighteenth century.<sup>10</sup>

The meticulousness of the Indian artist in his representation of personal adornments always so accurate, such as dyes for the hands, and fashions in costume and jewelry are especially noticeable. The terminology which we have thought well to use for jewelry and costume more commonly seen in paintings is equally precise. Durgā wears a pearl thread in the parting of the hair (*Sir-māga*); a pearl pendant (*tīkā*); a nose ring of the type piercing the cartilage of the nose (*be-sarī*), the more usual form piercing the nostril; large round earrings surrounded with pearls and having dangles; seven necklaces (*mālā*) all but one, strings of pearls, and that a broad gold-linked band (*dhukad-hukī*) type, hanging low on the breasts. Armlets bordered with pearls (*bhuja-band*) are worn and gold wrist bands ornamented with jewels and bordered with pearls. Black pompons also adorned with pearls, on the slender cord from which they hang, are fastened to the armlets and wrist bands. On the head is worn an elaborate jeweled and pointed crown having three lotus blooms and the crescent of Śiva, whose Śakti she is, extended from the brow. The asura, indicative of his leadership, wears a forehead pendant, a breast pendant, armlets, wristlets and necklaces, either of pearls or adorned with pearls. The representation of costume is equally precise. Durgā wears a tight-fitting bodice (*colī*) which usually covers the breasts or nearly so as in this painting, a skirt (*ghagara*) gathered at the waist, and a muslin sari worn as an overskirt with vertical folds hanging over the legs in front, the end having a gold band embroidered with silver and applique flowers. A blue cotton shawl (*orhnī*) embroidered with white dots covers the head and back, the

<sup>10</sup> Catalogue of Indian collections. Rājput Painting, page 37. A. K. Coomaraswamy.

end issuing in front under the border of the *sārī*, which is ornamented with a gold fringe.

Dyes mark her hands and special parts of her face. Between the brows is a vermilion spot (*tikā*) ; two stripes of sandal paste mark her forehead, a sectarian mark (*chāp*) ; cochineal (*lalssa*), a red dye, is applied to the fore part of her hands and henna (*mihamda*) to the finger nails.

In this connection it is a convention in all Indian art that all deities of major rank, excepting the Buddha,<sup>11</sup> be adorned with crowns and jeweled ornaments — since in an aristocratic society they are regarded as the highest caste in an elaborate hierarchy and as such, have the adornments of royalty.

## ITALO-BYZANTINE PANELS AT BOLOGNA

BY EVELYN SANDBERG VAVALA

*Florence, Italy*

OUR knowledge of the local schools of painting in Italy in the thirteenth century is as yet fragmentary. Around the few fixed signed and dated works exists a vast periphery of vaguely explored and unassigned material which cannot be referred with certainty to any one of the known centres. At Lucca, thanks to the signed works of the Berlinghieri and of Deodato Orlandi and to the great equality of their respective styles, a great number of paintings have been satisfactorily accounted for. At Pisa around Giunta and Enrico di Tedice less numerous groups have been put together, leaving as yet unfixed a large quantity of kindred but not strictly homogeneous works, of which we can at least say that they are Pisan. At Florence the unidentified material is still more abundant, the definite personalities fewer, the local character less clearly defined. At Siena, at Arezzo and in Umbria there is in each case one well-known artist (I refer to Guido, Margaritone and the Master of S. Francesco), with a marked personal style and an ex-

<sup>11</sup> A few crowned Buddhas are found mainly in Cambodia but these represent a special problem in iconography which has not yet been thoroughly investigated.

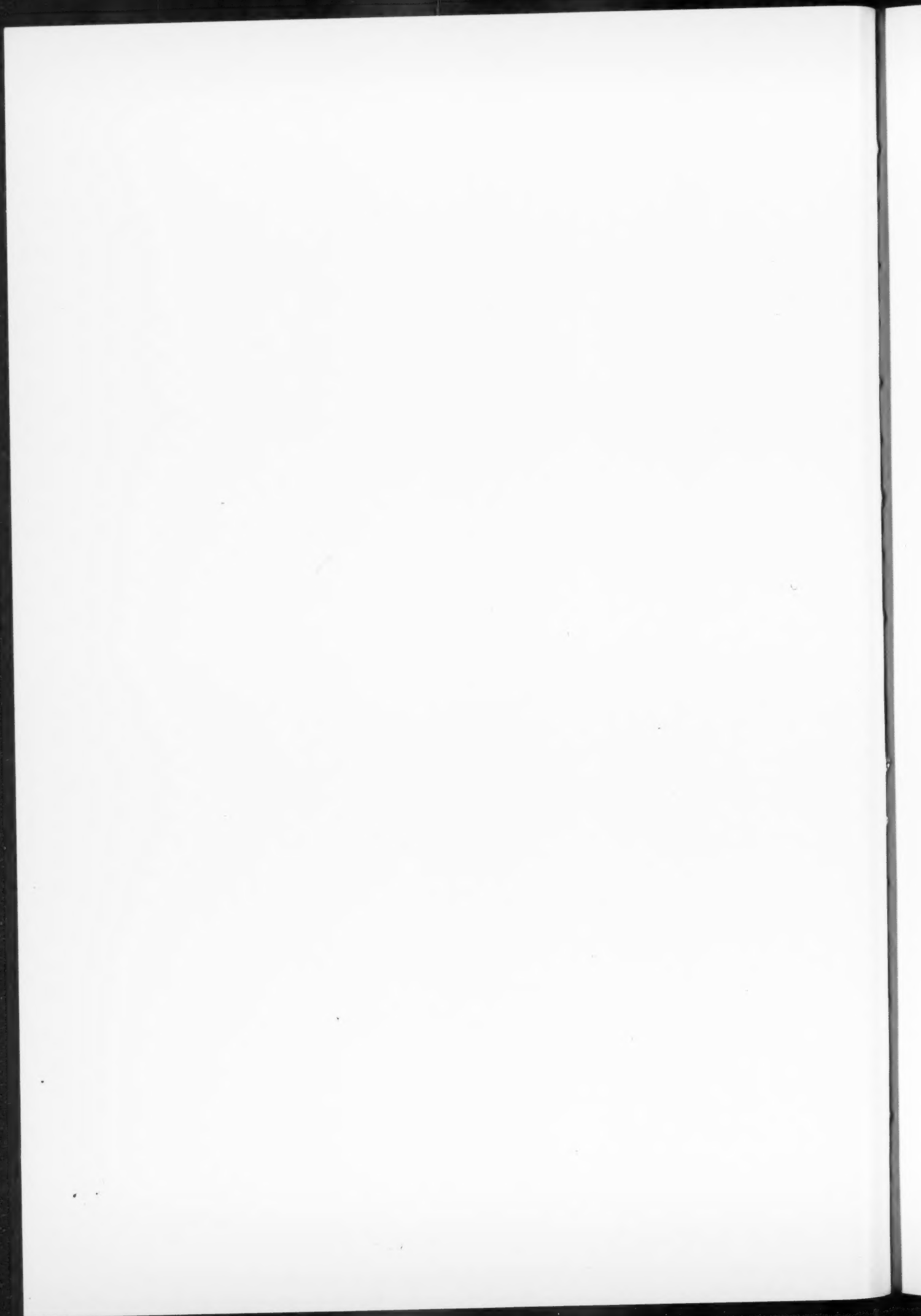




FIG. 1. THE NATIVITY. THIRTEENTH CENTURY  
*Pinacoteca, Bologna*



FIG. 2. THE PREPARATION OF THE CROSS. THIRTEENTH CENTURY  
*Pinacoteca, Bologna*



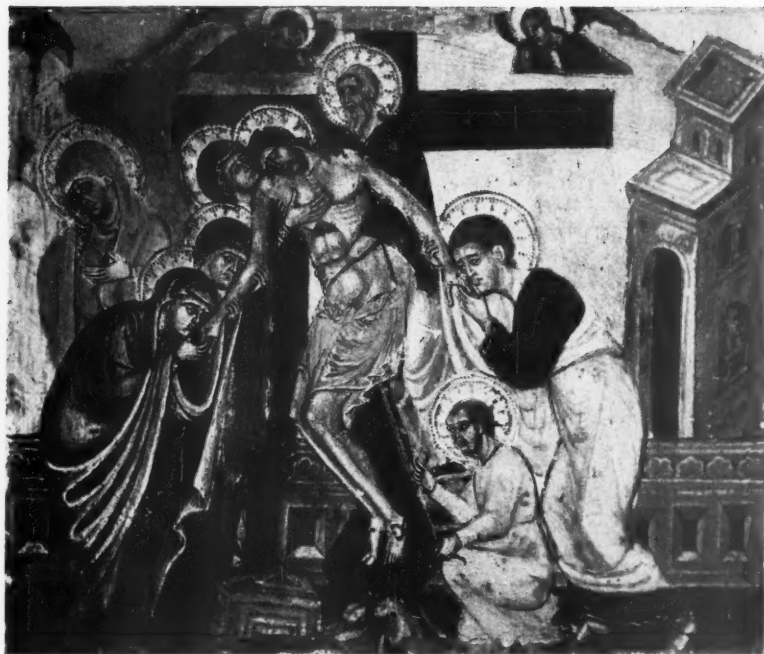


FIG. 3. THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS. THIRTEENTH CENTURY  
*Pinacoteca, Bologna*

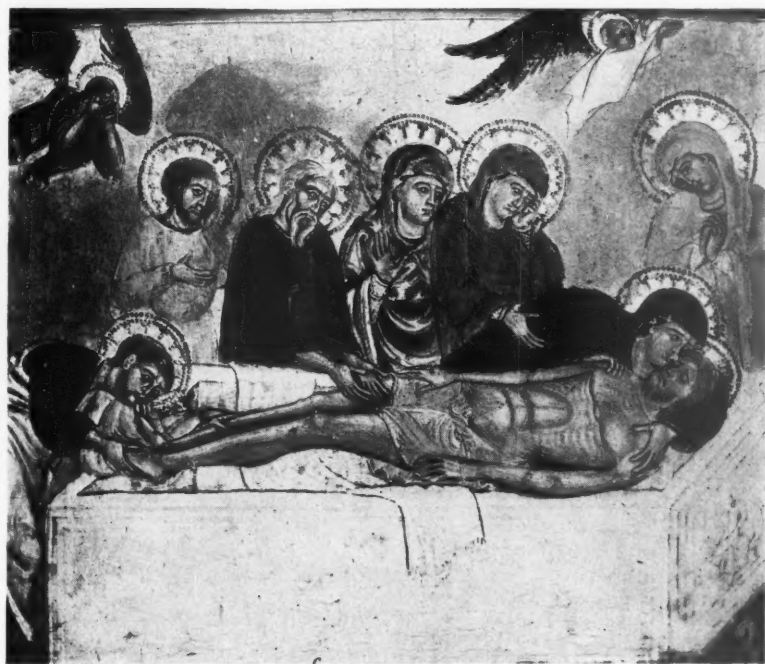
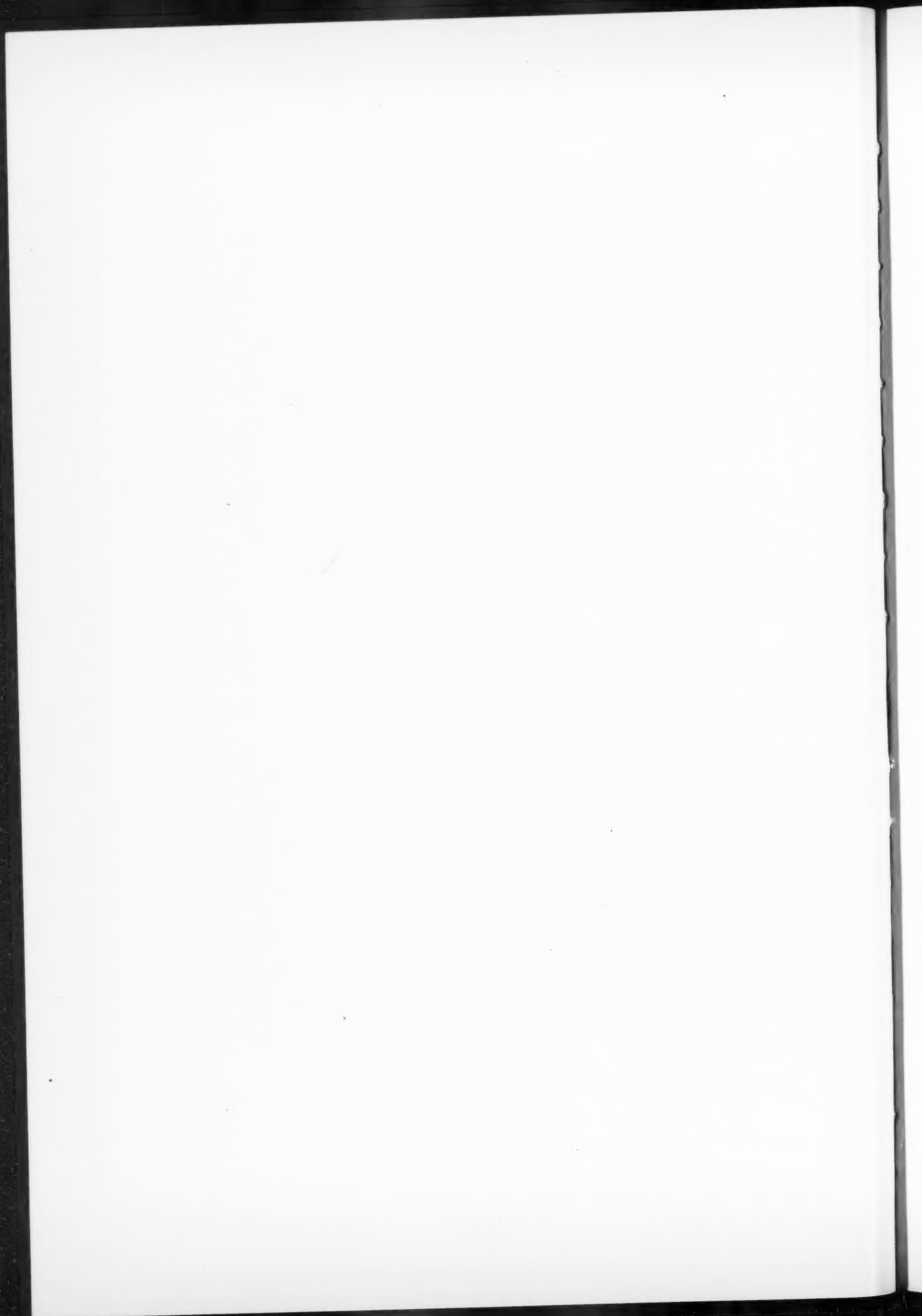


FIG. 4. THE PIETA. THIRTEENTH CENTURY  
*Pinacoteca, Bologna*





tensive *oeuvre*, which serves as a nucleus around which other vaguer attributions can be made.

In Central Italy then it is already possible to deal with some degree of certainty (or at least of probability) with groups and schools and classifications, though the honest student must often be conscious of the insufficiency of their actual delimitation. But in North Italy the clear, and often sharply defined contrasts, which exist between province and province in the *trecento* are in no way foreshadowed in the preceding century. What do we know of the *dugento* painters of Milan, of Verona, of Padua, of Ferrara, of Bologna? Venice alone is clearly defined in her mosaic production which was an imported and alien ingraft; but in the other centres just mentioned the only works surely assignable to the nameless local masters are the few, and generally inferior, fresco fragments, whose very age is often only deducible from the architectural evidence of the building they cover and whose direct claim to belong to their respective cities is their poverty and their anonymous character. In those days of intense political segregation it is unlikely that a foreign master would have been called from outside for such second-rate performances. Lombardy alone has here and there some nobler examples of Romanico-Byzantine art, still, however, anonymous and without clearly defined local characteristics. Lombardy and Verona, mainly, nay almost exclusively, devoted to fresco-painting in the *trecento*, did not perhaps produce many panel paintings in the preceding century. At Venice there may well have been panels and icons as slightly distinguishable from true Byzantine productions as are the best of her earlier mosaics, and perhaps she dominated the output of Padua, whose earliest *trecento* painters are clearly of Veneto-Byzantine origin. But Bologna, half-way house between the classic environment of Central Italy, where styles were formed and where progress and innovation fermented, and the outlying north, meeting place in the *trecento* of the Giottesco-Cavalinesque currents of the Marches and the Sienese influence with the Western French and German Gothicism of Piedmont and Verona, Bologna the most prolific, though not the most refined of all the northern centres, what part had she in the evolution of the *dugento*? One surmises that she must have had her *dugento* panel painters, her *dugento* Byzantinism. This much is deducible from the facts that her flourishing school of miniaturists number among their earlier products true works of the *Maniera Byzantina*; that her *trecento* artists for all the glaring defects of their style, their gross and obvious failings, were very

creditable technicians; that her local gallery, replenished from the churches and convents of the city, contains a richer group of Byzantinizing panels than any gallery in North Italy save only the Venetian Correr. These panels are many of them late; a few obvious importations, the majority bungling adaptations of Greek models, by Bolognese *trecento* and even *quattrocento Madonneri*. They testify at least to the existence of such models within the city and to the demand for their reproduction. These *Madonneri* have as little to do with the main stream of artistic creation at Bologna as have the majority of Byzantinizing panels in the Correr with the genuine creative line which runs from Maestro Paolo to Lorenzo Veneziano and so on to the opening *Quattrocento*. But at Bologna there was doubtlessly another artistic current, whose exponents participated in the true progress of the Italian *dugento*, which led up to the extensive, and at least in some of its technical aspects, rich local production in the following century.

The city is, however, singularly poor in extant material of this vanished period. A rough and second-rate fresco of the *Massacre of the Innocents*, which came from the church of the Calvario and is now preserved in the Museum of S. Stefano, is certainly local and reflects a cheap and vulgar imitation of Greek monumental art, such as was disseminated in Italy by the mosaic workers. At the extreme end of the century Bologna can claim at least to have entertained if not to have produced an excellent painter of crucifixes,<sup>1</sup> who left in one of the crosses at S. Francesco perhaps the most beautiful production of its kind in the whole *dugento*. But the author of this crucifix certainly had his artistic beginnings in Umbria, and I see, as yet, no means of deciding whether he was a Bolognese, who migrated to Assisi for instruction, or an Umbrian who journeyed in search of employment from Assisi to Fabriano, from Fabriano to Faenza, leaving specimens by the way of his art, learned of Cimabue and of the Master of S. Francesco, until he found in Bologna a ready market for his wares and settled down to enrich her stately churches with a numerous group of noble painted crosses. We hear also, and alas it remains but hearsay, unconsolidated by sure evidence, of a later connection between the miniature of Umbria and of Bologna in the persons of Oderisio of Gubbio and of Franco Bolognese. But with these slender exceptions the history of painting at

<sup>1</sup> I have treated this painter at length in "*La croce dipinta italiana e l'iconografia della Passione*." Bologna (in the press). His activity was in part defined by Oswald Sirén in *Toskanische Mater con XIII Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1922), under the appellation "Meister der Franziskaner-Kruefixe."



Bologna begins full-fledged, in mid *trecento*, with Vitale and with Niccolò the miniaturist.

Amid the varied and unequal group of so-called Byzantine paintings displayed in the Bologna gallery (among which we may note in passing an interesting half length of the Virgin and at least five late versions of a self-same *Pietà*, which anticipates, iconographically speaking, the famous group of Michelangelo at S. Peter's, and which it seems to me can go back no further than some eastern model of the thirteenth century) there are few painters of finer quality and earlier date and which may perhaps be ranked with the *Massacre of the Innocents* and the aforesaid group of painted crosses as true products of the Bolognese *dugento*.

The paintings to which I refer are four small slightly convex panels now grouped together in a modern frame under the No. 316. The *Nativity* (Fig. 1) in the upper left-hand corner is followed by the *Preparation for the Cross* (Fig. 2) on the right, and below these come the *Descent from the Cross* (Fig. 3) and the *Deposition in the Tomb* (Fig. 4). The present arrangement gives us no clue as to the nature of the whole of which the four scenes originally formed a part, nor does the choice of subject enlighten us. The slight convexity of the panels and the inclusion of the *Nativity* exclude the possibility that they were cut from a storied crucifix; the inclusion of the *Preparation for the Cross* makes it unlikely that they formed part of a Byzantine cycle of the twelve *Feasts of the Church*.

The style of these little pictures is a pure example of that well-nigh impersonal imitation of the Byzantine manner which the Italian *dugentist* learnt to produce under the stimulus of precept and example of the Greek masters. Nothing is here that is discordant with the canons of Greek icon-painting; though there are certain fallings short and an undeniable difference of quality. Nothing is here that is not subject to the all-dominating rhythm of the Byzantines, rhythm both of composition and of outline, nothing that evades their careful subordination of scenery to the human element. The faces are treated with at least a passable imitation of Byzantine technique, with that system of light and shade ably described by Paul Muratoff in his recent study,<sup>2</sup> and the drapery reiterates their fundamental conception in its regular and careful attention of white high light on dark general surface. We are fully sensitive to the suggestion that the prismatic landscape of the

<sup>2</sup> *La pittura Bizantina*. Rome, 1928. Chapter iii.

*Nativity* owes its form, nay its existence, to the exigencies of the distribution of the scattered figures which go to form this most casual and disconnected of all Byzantine iconographic formulae, that the symmetrical staging of the two scenes at the foot of the Cross with their architectural wings, varied but carefully counterpoised and linked by the low running parapet, were called into being to define and support the judicious pyramidal constructions of the two central figure groups, and where in the fourth scene there is neither the landscape basal plane nor the architectural drop-scene, we feel disconcertedly that the programme has not been carried to fulfilment. It is in this respect the least Byzantine of the four compositions and the most typically Italian.

Style and iconography go hand in hand in these little studies. Just as the artist has carefully imitated every detail of his drapery and modelling from his Greek preceptors, every combination of his carefully marshalled compositions, so his iconographic formulae belong to that neutral ground of the *dugento* where Italy meets Byzantium. No theme here but what might — nay, did appear — in many another contemporary or slightly anterior work executed in Byzantium or her neighbourhood.

Yet Byzantine these pictures are not, in spite of their descriptive label in the Gallery of Bologna, and this fact was recognized clearly by Dr. Gabriel Millet when he used them as iconographic material in his masterly treatise of 1916 “Recherches sur l’iconographie de l’Evangile.”

To lay one’s hand on the slender and evasive distinction that divides them from true Byzantine productions would be to define the whole relation of Italy to the mother art-civilization in this critical century, when Italy submitted to a rigorous schooling, which amounted almost to the obliteration of her own artistic personality, and prepared the way for her vigorous self-development in the century which followed. The differences are subtle, and as is natural in what is clearly an imitative essay, chiefly but not entirely negative. The subtlety of the rhythm, the smoothness of the execution, the command of all technical niceties, are imperfectly achieved, though carefully aimed at. That vague indefinite background with its plunging and rising angels somehow lifts the little *Pietà* into a world of high poetic expressivity which lacks in the more carefully staged *Deposition*, and there is in the iconography of the *Nativity* a noticeable (and for Italy a characteristic) omission of the Magi, who at this epoch in a truly Byzantine composition would be seen stealing in from the left between the rock ridges with their Phrygian

caps and their gifts in their hands. In this same scene there is indeed (and we may cite it as the first *positive* divergence) a Western accessory — the scrolls with their Latin inscriptions in the hands of the angels (who again are too few and too far isolated for a typical Byzantine example of this scene), a device of an all too popular and anti-esthetic character to be necessary at Byzantium, where, as Muratoff aptly expresses it, the pictorial formula was as immediately recognizable in virtue of its rhythmic invariability as the movements of the religious ceremony to which it formed a liturgic accompaniment. This *Nativity* with its scattered episodic groups, with its frank disunity of action in that the Babe is twice depicted in manger and bath-scene, will die out with the *dugento* in Italy in all save certain last refuges of Byzantinism, the schools of Siena, Umbria, and Venice. From Giotto onwards few Florentine painters will omit the characteristic shed-stable; the cave will disappear or dwindle to a mere hole in the background to accommodate the ox and ass; the mattress bed will follow suit (rarely, and only in monuments under specific Western influence, substituted by the bedstead); the bath scene will fall into abeyance, but the brooding half-sulky Joseph and the grazing flocks and the approaching shepherds will be perpetuated even after Mary leaves her bed to kneel by the manger or adore the child laid upon the ground. The story of the *Nativity* in Italy is the story of the gradual reduction and unification (in response no doubt to the imitation of the very simple formulae current in Romanesque and Gothic art on the other side of the Alps) of the cumbrous assemblance of persons and episodes which belong to the full Byzantine composition. The Magi are the first to be abolished and this first step is already completed at the epoch of our version at Bologna.

I will not linger over the iconographic content of the three scenes of the Passion which I have treated elsewhere,<sup>3</sup> except to summarize their immediate significance. The *Preparation of the Cross* is a new creation of the Middle Ages with apparently no precedent in early Christian iconography. Its late appearance and its foundation on the apochryphal texts would lead us to predict its unstable character. The Italian contemporary examples, not very numerous, are, however, too widely distributed for it to help us to attach our picture to any fixed centre. If we follow out the particular motives here included, Christ stripped of His tunic and as yet not mounting the ladder, we find the first again in a contemporary fresco at Ascoli Piceno,<sup>4</sup> and both together in a somewhat

<sup>3</sup> *op. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> Millet, *op. cit.*, fig. 414.

later panel at Perugia<sup>5</sup> (and once more if our unknown master be indeed Bolognese we have a thread of connection between Umbria and Bologna). The stripping takes place in slightly varied manner in a panel in the collection of Mr. Maitland Griggs at New York (Fig. 5), to which we shall return below, in a panel at Siena<sup>6</sup> and in the Cavallinesque fresco at Naples,<sup>7</sup> and for us more significantly in a panel referred to the Bolognese *trecento* at the Vatican<sup>8</sup> and in a Bolognese bible of the same period in the Dyson Perrins collection.<sup>9</sup> The very presence of this motive may be added to the sum of non-Byzantine characteristics, for there do not appear to be genuine examples from Byzantine or the East.<sup>10</sup>

The *Descent from the Cross* with Joseph on the ladder above the drooping Christ, with Mary who already receives her precious burden, belongs to a scheme developed in both Byzantium and Italy, but more especially in all its finer stages of more touching maternal sentiment in Italy. The variations of this theme are legion. In this case the body falls sideways in an uneven, broken curve; Mary raised upon a footstool supports the shoulder, passing her arm beneath the armpit, her cheek against the forehead. The exact grouping has, as far as I know, no precise parallel in Byzantine art, and in Italy it is most nearly matched in a somewhat later panel, belonging to Mr. Maitland Griggs (Fig. 6), companion to the *Preparation for the Crucifixion* referred to above, and in still another and earlier Byzantinizing example in the collection of Monsieur Adolph Stoclet, where, however, the curve of the body of Christ is quite different and more usual. Typically Italian, too, is the careful welding of all figures (or of almost all for the weeping Mary on the left is unharmoniously excluded) into a close-formed group, and the reduplication of the passionate gesture of the holy women in itself a reiteration of the attitude of Mary in an older tradition. For this detail as well as for every feature of the composition, save only the architectural background, the panel at Bologna is repeated in the later panel of the Maitland Griggs collection so much so

<sup>5</sup> Van Marle, "The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting," vol. I, fig. 224.

<sup>6</sup> Millet, *op. cit.*, fig. 419.

<sup>7</sup> Phot. Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione c. 1578.

<sup>8</sup> Phot. Alinari 38176.

<sup>9</sup> Sir George Warner. Descriptive Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts in the library of C. W. Dyson Perrins. Oxford, 1920, plate LIII.

<sup>10</sup> That the motive of the stripping is not limited to Italian iconography but is also known beyond the Alps is proved by its existence in the miniature of the Brailles Horae (English, thirteenth century), also in the Dyson Perrins Collection. (*Op. cit.*, plate Vc.)



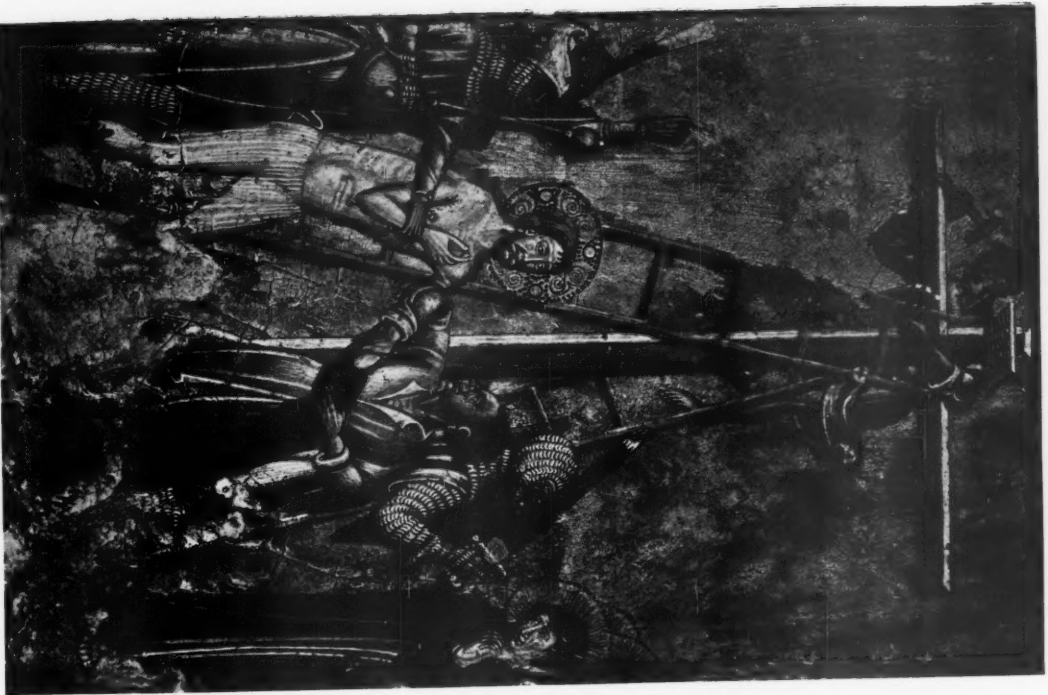
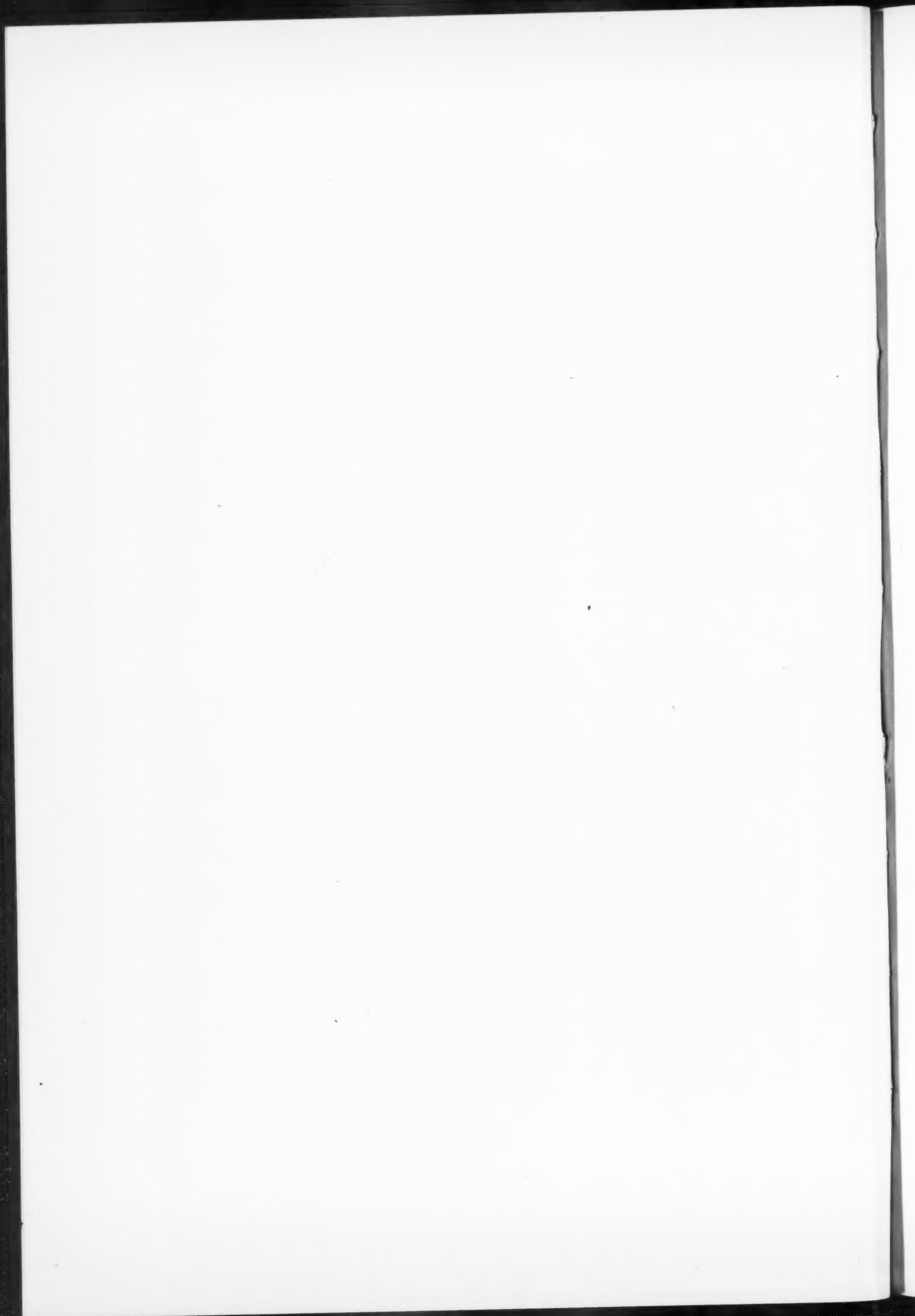


FIG. 5. THE PREPARATION OF THE CROSS. EARLY FOURTEENTH CENTURY  
*Collection of Mr. Matiland F. Griggs, New York*



FIG. 6. THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS. EARLY FOURTEENTH CENTURY  
*Collection of Mr. Matiland F. Griggs, New York*



that it is almost inevitable to conclude that there is some direct relationship between them. In the Bologna example the feet of Christ are still separately nailed and the perizoma is of a single material though still simulating in its folding the traditional arrangement of the separate girdle which held together a skirt-like drapery of contrasting texture; details these which may help to check the general chronological impression, for the separately nailed feet will be abandoned towards the last decade of the thirteenth century, and this type of perizoma was not initiated in Italy before about 1230, epoch of Giunta and of the Berlinghieri. Mr. Maitland Griggs's panel on the other hand shows the feet transfixed by a single nail and the transparent veil-like perizoma singly knotted on the flank, and for these and other reasons can scarcely have been painted before 1300. It may well have been modelled directly on the earlier version at Bologna, from which it differs compositionally, only in the abolition of the lonely awkward figure in the left-hand background and in the slight changes, and indeed improvements, in the grouping of Christ and Mary which allow her embrace to be more fervid. A correspondence so accurate as this is of strong value in the case of this particular composition which was in a state of complete flux in the *dugento*, and whose details vary from centre to centre and from artist to artist.

Far less characteristic of Italy and the *dugento* is the iconographic content of the *Pietà*, which, as we said, is more independent than its predecessors of Byzantine stylistic regulations. The typical aspect of this subject in Italy is the actual moment of the deposition, with the body slung upon a long white cloth, held at the head and feet by Joseph and Nicodemus or by Joseph and John. This sheet is here replaced by a mere towel-like strip beneath the knees. The body is already at rest upon the great square tomb and the bowed figure of John follows a Byzantine precedent (by no means rare, however, in Italy). The regular alignment of the mourners, and their still, quiet grief are also strongly Byzantine, and the highly characteristic feature of the Italianate ciborium above the tomb here lacks.

The purely artificial character of the architectural and ornamental details does not help us in placing our pictures, though a certain clumsiness bears out that falling off in quality which distinguishes the Italian imitation from the true Greek handicraft. The formal patterns are very common, especially the shell-work along the upper edge of the parapet in the *Preparation*, a motive commonest, I find, in Umbria. Other

peculiarities of the curious architectural erections are the great depth of the openings (quite in contrast to the sharply pierced trefoils and circles and quattrefoils characteristic in Tuscan paintings of the period and typically in the works of Berlinghieri and the Pisans), the predilection for statues in niches,<sup>11</sup> and the intrusion into these superficially Oriental constructions of such thoroughly Romanesque details as the round topped double-lighted window in the face of the right-hand building in the *Descent from the Cross*, or the window of four lights in the upper story of the gateway on the left of the *Preparation* or the crouching carytid figures in the capitals of its outjutting pillars which themselves savour of the Romanesque of Italy and, it seems to me, eminently of North Italy. Even the foliate cappings of the round tower in the same picture and its band of window-slits and the battlements of the aforementioned gateway are non-Byzantine.

The unknown artist, probably North Italian, possibly even Bolognese, has learned his lesson well. To his provincial patron his work might pass muster as pure Byzantine and in the very newest manner of the mid-*dugento*. It is even to our critical eye so intrinsically Byzantinizing that we cannot easily diagnose that faint residue of new Byzantine elements which represent the westerner, the relatively unschooled provincial, the struggling predecessor of a national art which became coherent in the following century as a direct result of its conscious eclectic subordination to Byzantinism in this one.

A word must be added about the palette of these panels at Bologna which have their chromatic idiosyncrasies. There is a strange accord of scarlet with greenish streaks of high-light for the perizoma of Christ in the various Passion scenes. As is more customary in the *dugento* the scarlet is, with this exception, laid on flat and even as is also on occasion a light honey brown. Light blues lack entirely, the Virgin's mantle being always a blue black with very slight relief; and the other draperies in which the streaky Byzantinizing modelling is conspicuous are either green or carmine touched in either case with white along the salients. The flesh tints are heavy; grey and livid for the dead body of Christ, greyish also with obvious green underpaint and reddish lines and shadows for the faces. The architecture is sober in colour; predominantly

<sup>11</sup> It is interesting to note that the tomb in the *Pietà* was originally ornamented with figures now barely decipherable. Along the front I have been able to distinguish the faint residue of a central cross and two flanking palm trees with four figures in the intervals between them, in obvious reminiscence of a Ravennate sarcophagus. The figure group at the end is faintly visible even in the illustration.



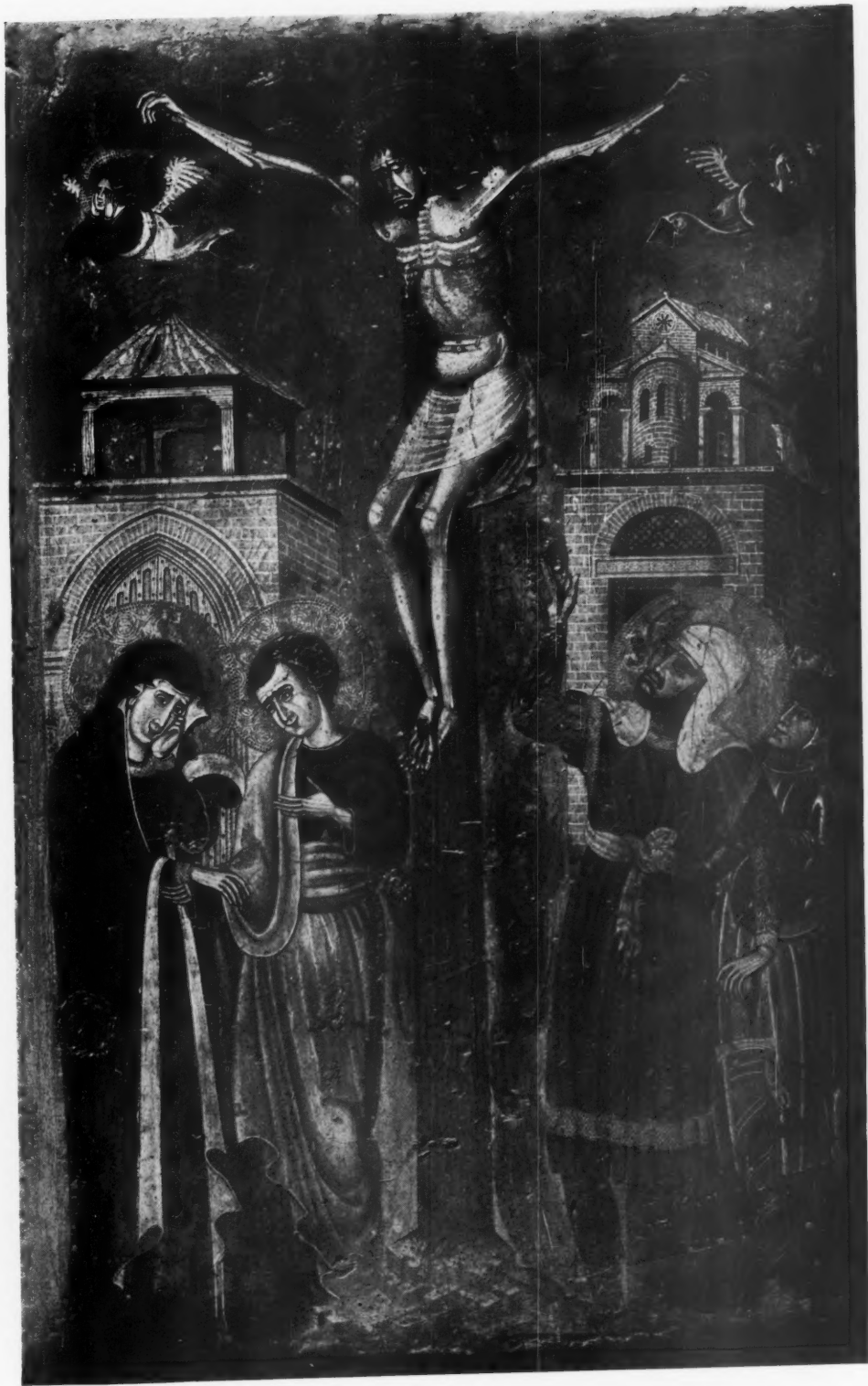


FIG. 7. THE CRUCIFIXION. EARLY FOURTEENTH CENTURY  
*Royal Institution, Liverpool*



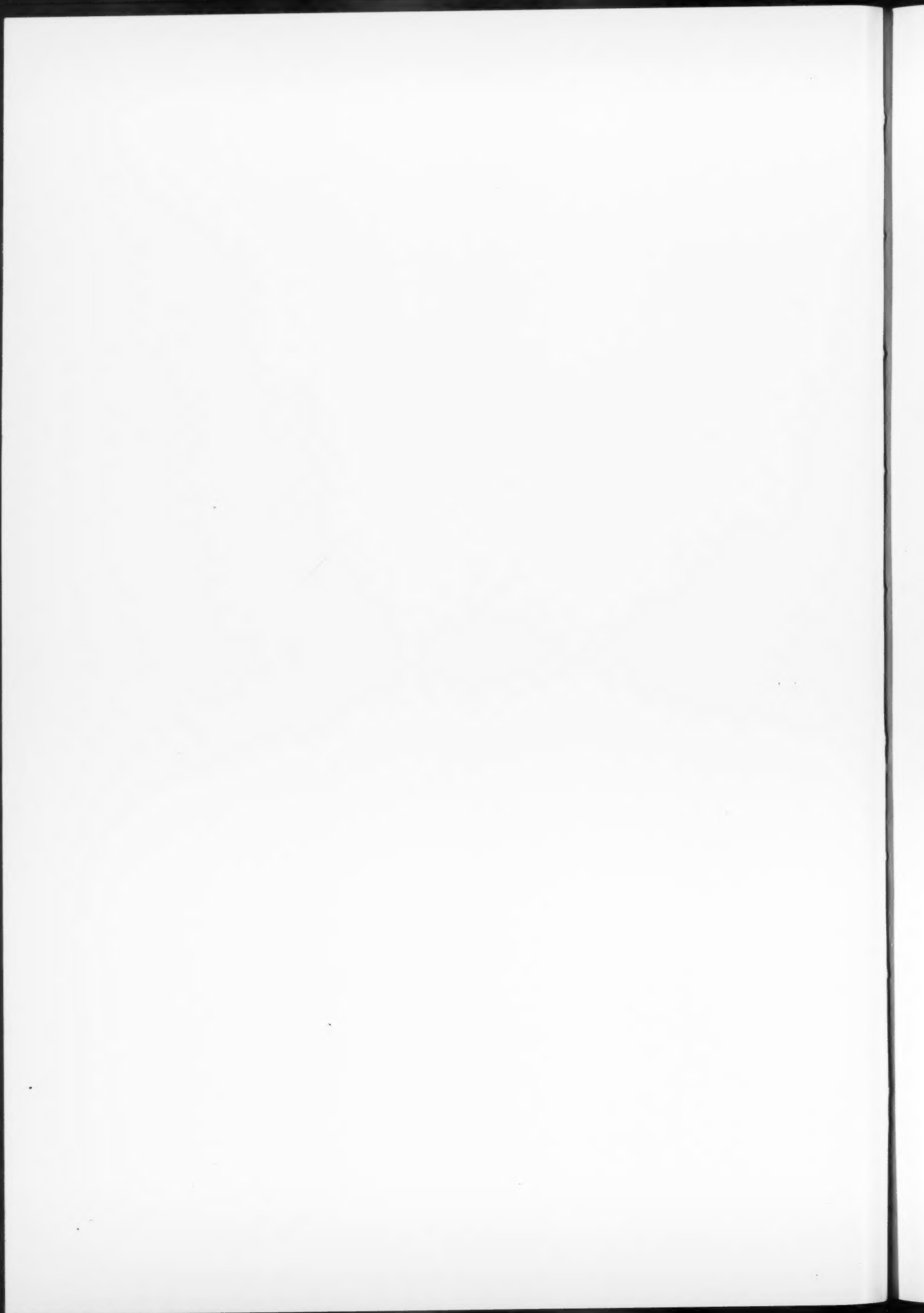
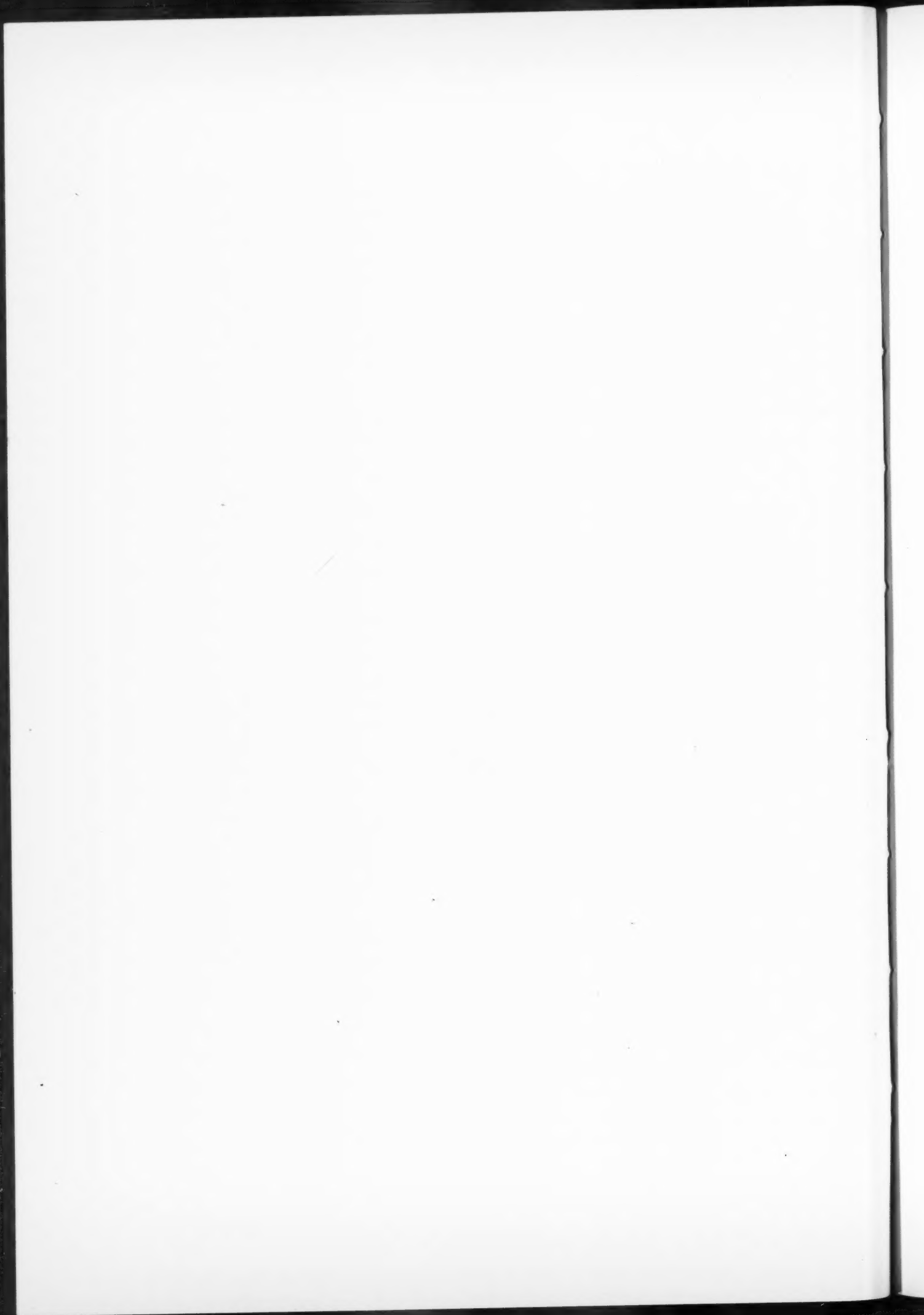




FIG. 8. DETAIL OF AN ALTARPIECE ATTRIBUTED TO JACOPO D'AVANAZO. FOURTEENTH CENTURY  
*Pinacoteca, Bologna*





green, brown and white. The rock base of the *Nativity* is chrome-yellow. The backgrounds, which are, of course, of gold, are much damaged and patched over near the figure groups. The tooling of the nimbs is coarse and elementary.

A presumption in favour of North Italy or even of Bologna as the place of origin of these four scenes is given by their present whereabouts, but I have not been able to trace their history before they belonged to the *Pinacotheca*. A still more potent argument (but also negative and therefore no more trustworthy) is the fact that they fit readily into none of the well-known groups of Tuscany or Umbria. The title Italo-Byzantine or *Maniera Byzantina* best becomes them, *faute de mieux*, and my excuse for their detailed study is a double one: that from the unexplored ranks of the so-called Italo-Byzantine productions must come the nuclei of new groups which will tend to fill the gap between the scattered fragments of our knowledge; that in the study of such paintings, even when it falls short of their attribution and classification, there is a reward by the way and that a most precious one — a more just appreciation of Italy's debt to Byzantium and the growing definition of the essence of Byzantine art itself.

There is, however, still another argument to be advanced for the North Italian origin of this little group of paintings. To return to the panels in the Maitland Griggs collection we have already noted that the two scenes of the *Preparation for the Cross* are not unrelated and those of the *Descent from the Cross* are so closely parallel as to suggest a direct imitation on the part of the later artist. Even stylistically there are threads of connection, though the Byzantinism, direct and immediate in the Bologna panel, has become a shadowy reminiscence in the later versions.<sup>12</sup> Dr. Offner has drawn my attention to a third work by the author of the New York panels, a *Crucifixion* in the Royal Institution at Liverpool (Fig. 7), where the Byzantinizing edicolae, omitted in the *Descent from the Cross*, are revived under new and strange as-

<sup>12</sup> One may trace, for example, the selfsame scheme for the female standing figure, best illustrated among the earlier panels in the Virgin in the *Preparation for the Cross* (Fig. 2), with the women in the later *Descent from the Cross* (Fig. 6). It is identical in conception and very close even in the individual treatment, and goes back to a widely diffused formula of Byzantine origin, repeated in Italy wherever there is direct stylistic imitation of the East. There is again more than a slight relation between the drapery of the two St. Johns in the two versions of the *Descent from the Cross* (Figs. 3 and 6). To turn to the types themselves, the later Christ is certainly derived from the earlier one, and the John from the John, and the Joseph of Arimathea from the Joseph of Arimathea. The relation between the female types is less immediate, those in the Maitland Griggs panels being already far advanced towards the style of the full *trecento* (and in particular with the Bolognese *trecento*).

pect; that of brick buildings of fantastic and unreal general character, with details borrowed from actual contemporary local architecture. The one on the left, church-like, with pointed archway and wooden doorway, is surmounted by a wooden loggia with tiled roof, which recalls the *Loggia dei Cavalieri* at Treviso. The one on the right is a towering mass with round headed doorway, capped by a small chapel with curious apse and pillared porticoes. Dr. Offner's attribution needs no discussion, as the artist has repeated from picture to picture every trick of grimace or of drapery rhythm, every ornamental device.<sup>13</sup> But the background of the Liverpool picture is of paramount importance for our thesis, viz., that this second artist, active on the turn or perhaps in the first decade of the *trecento*, was North Italian, a conclusion which reacts upon our former suggestion that the four panels at the Bologna *Pinacotheca* (his model for the *Disposition from the Cross*) were indeed local products. There is even a shred of evidence attaching the *anonimo* responsible for the three pictures at Liverpool and New York to Bologna itself and not merely to North Italy in general (for the brick buildings of his *Crucifixion* would do as well for Verona or for Ferrara as for Bologna), and that is the fatal tendency, in common to him and to all the Bolognese *trecentists*, to turn despair into caricature by a vulgar and easily achieved expedient of drawing the mouth as an inverted half circle. Vitale himself, the most refined of the Bolognese, at times indulged in this habit; his followers of the next generation perpetuated it, schematized it. It is found in the so-called Jacopo d'Avanzo (Fig. 8) in Simone dei Crocifissi and with reiterated monotony in every single figure of the only signed work we possess of the mysterious Cristoforo da Bologna. May we not then, as working hypothesis, indicate this humble painter as probable denizen of Bologna in the opening century, and his more Byzantine and less individualized predecessor as a *possible* Bolognese, at any rate a North Italian, of the mid-*dugento*?

<sup>13</sup> A curious detail in this last picture harks back to the earlier set of panels — the scabbard with its spiral ornament in the hand of the centurion to be found again in the *Preparation for the Cross* at Bologna (Fig. 2).



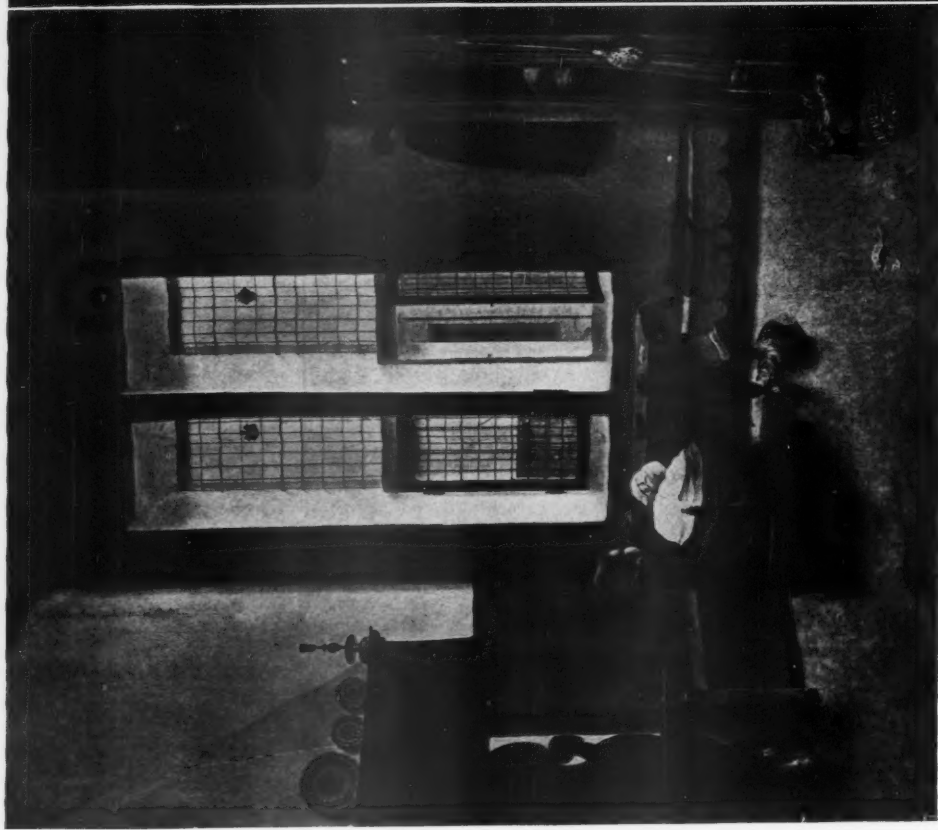


FIG. 1. JACOBUS VREL: INTERIOR WITH WOMAN AND BOYS  
*Museum of Art, Brussels*



FIG. 2. JACOBUS VREL: THE LITTLE NURSE  
*Museum of Art, Antwerp*



## DUTCH GENRE PAINTERS IN THE MANNER OF PIETER DE HOOCH

### II<sup>1</sup>

#### JACOBUS VREL

By W. R. VALENTINER

*Detroit, Mich.*

AMONG the painters who by the casual museum visitor are easily mistaken for Pieter de Hooch, the most fascinating is perhaps the mysterious Jacobus Vrel, mysterious because his name is known to us only through the signatures on some of his paintings. No mention is made of him in old Dutch Auction Catalogues or documents. We have, in fact, no actual proof that he was a Dutchman. Although he is generally associated with the schools of Delft or of Amsterdam, he may equally well have been a native of one of the neighbouring countries — Friesland or the lower Rhineland. One of his paintings, owned by an English dealer — the Interior of a Catholic Church in the style of the Gothic Cathedrals of Flanders — might also point to the southern Netherlands. Practically all of his pictures with which we are familiar must have been painted in the fifth and sixth decades of the seventeenth century, which coincides with isolated dates on some of his signed paintings — and the greater number of them fall under two general classifications: simple, bourgeois interiors and street scenes.

His two most pleasing interiors (Figs. 1 and 2) are both in Belgian Museums — in Brussels and Antwerp respectively — and were credited to Isaac Koedijk until Dr. Hofstede de Groot recognized them as the work of Jacobus Vrel (the one in Antwerp has a forged Pieter de Hooch signature). Their arrangement is typical of Vrel's interiors — high, simply planned rooms, constructed almost wholly of horizontal and vertical lines, with finely observed lighting and whitewashed walls. The few figures animating these interiors are generally seen from the rear or in profile and constitute almost the only diagonal lines in the composition. In comparison with the delineation of the light and the arrangement of the room these figures seem almost insignificant in their occupations — a woman rummaging in a drawer; seated by a sick bed; combing her child's hair — as in the painting in the Detroit Museum,<sup>2</sup> or

<sup>1</sup> First article on Esaias Boursse in *ART IN AMERICA*, Vol. XVI, Number IV (June, 1928).

<sup>2</sup> This painting has a curious signature on a piece of paper lying on the floor. It reads: Jcaobus Cralle. The first word with its wrong spelling is quite legible, in the second word the three last letters cannot be read otherwise, the three first ones, however, may have been possibly originally vrel.

seated pensively beside a stove as in the paintings in a private collection in Berlin and in the Hermitage. The artist has gone to no great pains in the delineation of these figures. He is entirely preoccupied with problems of color and the values of light, and to this end he simplifies the arrangement of his compositions as far as possible. He seems extraordinarily modern in this respect, and we understand in a measure how Burger-Thoré (1866), who re-discovered Vermeer, should have attributed several of Vrel's paintings to this great master with whom Vrel had in common a disregard of detail very rare in that day.

It is quite natural that with this unobjective, "l'art pour l'art" attitude Vrel should not have hesitated to repeat the linear pattern of his compositions — changing only color scheme and lighting. The two paintings in Brussels and Antwerp mentioned above, although sufficiently related, represent two extremes in the artist's interiors between which all his others may be ranged. The Antwerp composition is repeated twice with only inconsequential changes — once in a painting formerly owned by Mr. F. Lugt in Maartensdijk (Holland), and the other in the John D. McIlhenny Collection in the Philadelphia Museum. A painting in the Museum at Lille, with a lad resting his head on his mother's lap, corresponds with the Brussels picture. The motif of the sick nurse — familiar to us from the Antwerp picture — is repeated in a painting formerly in the Sedelmeyer Collection in Paris, where it was attributed to T. Koedijk. Here, however, a cradle stands beside the bed, and in the right foreground there is a back view of a woman stooping over a stove. A front view of this same stove with a woman stooping before it is repeated in the painting formerly in the Stephan Michel Collection in Mayence and now in the Krupp Collection at Essen. This view of the stove with five Delft plates on the shelf above it, and several pewter vessels hanging from it, appears in four other pictures: one in the Hermitage; one in a private collection in Berlin; one in the former Bischofsheim Collection in Paris; and one in the McIlhenny Collection in Philadelphia. (This is a second smaller picture attributed to Boursse and should not be confused with the replica of the Antwerp picture.) In all four compositions two chairs stand in front of the stove. In one instance a woman is seated on the right; in another on the left. In three of the pictures she turns her back to the spectator, and in the Berlin picture she is seated sideways by the stove leaning against a big white cushion, with a cat and a little dog at her feet (Fig. 3). In the smaller painting in the McIlhenny Collection, in which the upper part of the stove is not visible, we find the curious motif of the woman tilting her chair. This



FIG. 3. JACOBUS VREL: WOMAN RESTING BESIDE A STOVE  
*Private Collection, Berlin*

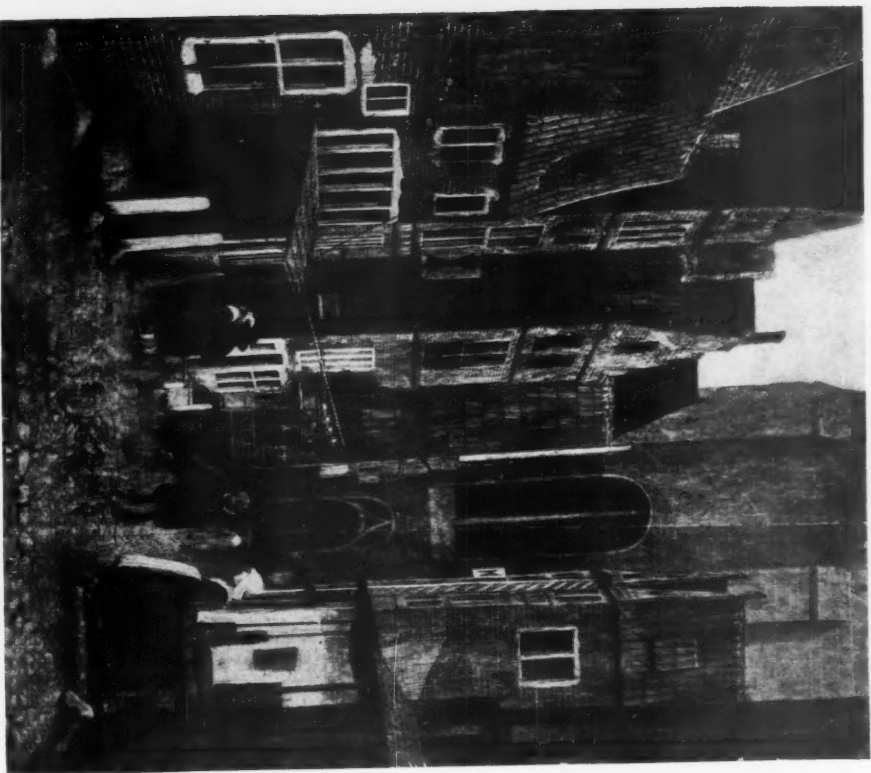
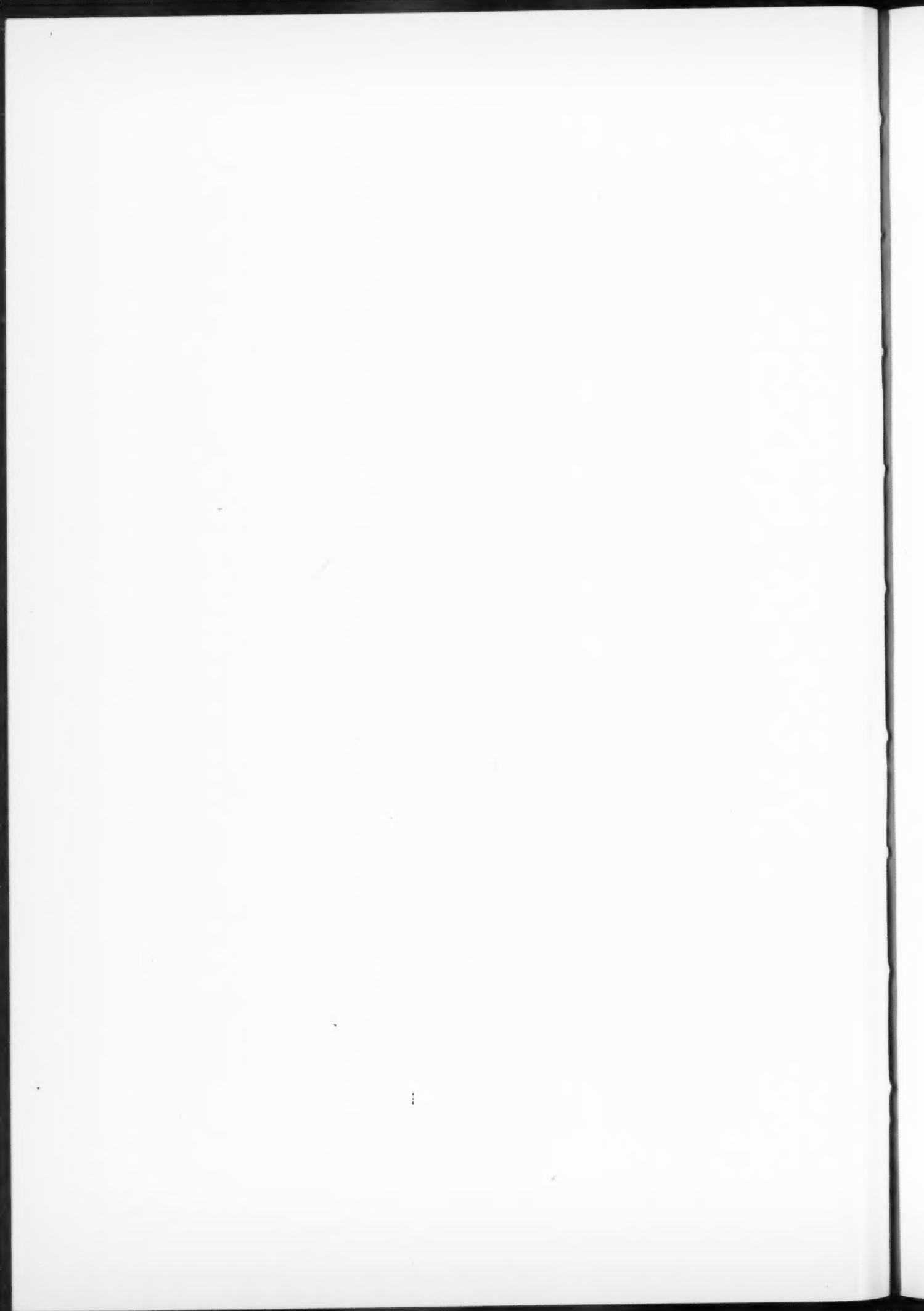


FIG. 4. JACOBUS VREL: STREET SCENE  
*John G. Johnson Collection, Philadelphia*





same motif reappears in a charming little painting in the Lugt Collection in Maartensdijk. Here the woman is seated by a large closed window with her back turned towards us. She is beckoning to a boy whom we can see through the window and her chair is so violently tilted that it seems as though she must lose her balance. Two other compositions bear a relationship to the above painting — one in the Vienna Staatsgalerie, painted in 1654, showing a woman leaning out of the window, and, on the right, the inevitable stove with a chair beside it; the other in the Schloss Collection in Paris is a front view of an older woman seated reading in the centre of the room with a light colored wall behind her and a boy looking through the window in the rear as in the picture in the Lugt Collection.

In this repetition of individual features, or even of all the essentials of a composition, Jacobus Vrel differs radically from Esaias Boursse, whose attitude was much more objective, and who, if there was a similarity in his themes, such as "The Washerwoman," "The Sleeping Woman," or "The Boy Blowing Soap Bubbles," presented them all in totally dissimilar fashion. Boursse's preoccupation with detail, his plastic modelling of the figures, stands much closer to the typical genre painting of his day than Vrel's work of whom a flat treatment of theme and figure is characteristic. His figures are not conceived plastically, his perspective is less deep than that of Pieter de Hooch and his followers. The charm of his paintings lies in their decorative pattern of light and dark spots, in which the white of the walls, the brown of the wainscoting and the warm red or dark bluish green of his women's dresses ring the changes.

The painting in the Lugt Collection, or the "Conversation at the Window" in the Heyl Collection at Worms (that once was attributed to Vermeer, mentioned in Hofstede de Groot's catalogue raisonné under No. 51c), which forms a link between his interiors and street scenes, are typical of this flat treatment which is almost without parallel in Dutch painting of that period. The door and window frames, the posts at the street corner, and the woman's cloak and black shoes create an effect of dark decorations on light spaces. The round cobblestones, too, with which the streets are always paved in Vrel's paintings, and the windows of the house in the background partake of this ornamental character.

The artist repeats himself less often in the detail of his street scenes than in his interiors. In each picture of this type, of which the two most charming ones are in the museums at Hamburg (Fig. 5) and at Amsterdam (Fig. 6), (others in the Johnson [Fig. 14] and McIlhenny Collections

in Philadelphia; in the former Ruhl Collection [1876]; the Kums Collection in Antwerp [1898], the Oldenburg Collection and the De Stuers Collection at the Hague) we get a glimpse of different houses, though the manner of treatment is identical. The narrow street with alternating high and low brick houses is invariably shallow, and to further heighten this flat effect several of the housewalls are placed parallel with the spectator. The rear and side views of the comparatively large single figures introduced correspond with this general plan. The charm of these scenes lies largely in their pale grey and rosy tones which sometimes remind one of Whistler. Wherever we come across these little paintings their originality and delicate coloring endear to us this artist who so often treats his figures in amateurish fashion.

In addition to the church interior in an English collection, mentioned at the beginning of this article, there is in Castle Bentheim a second interior of a Gothic church, with a number of figures, which has been attributed to Vrel, and which, as Hofstede de Groot points out, is reminiscent of an unsigned engraving which, according to the inscription represents a discussion on the Heidelberg Catechism, and was published by the Amsterdam publisher, Jacques Boursse, "Boekverkooper op deley graft in de beurs van Antwerpen."

## STUDIES ON GIUSEPPE MARIA CRESPI

### PART TWO

BY VICTOR LASAREFF

*Moscow, U. S. S. R.*

TO the same period should be assigned three original pictures by Crespi on mythological subjects: the graceful Cupid and Psyche in the Uffizi, the broadly and brilliantly painted Blinding of Polymnester in Brussels and the Bacchic scene in the Pinacotheca of Bologna, somewhat reminiscent of Rubens in its purely sensualistic feeling. In the second decade (about 1712) must also be placed the remarkable series of the Seven Sacraments in Dresden, executed for the Cardinal Ottoboni. This cycle of pictures marks the culminating point not only of Crespi's artistic development, but also of seicento painting as a whole. The



FIG. 5. JACOBUS VREL: STREET SCENE  
*Kunstshalle, Hamburg*

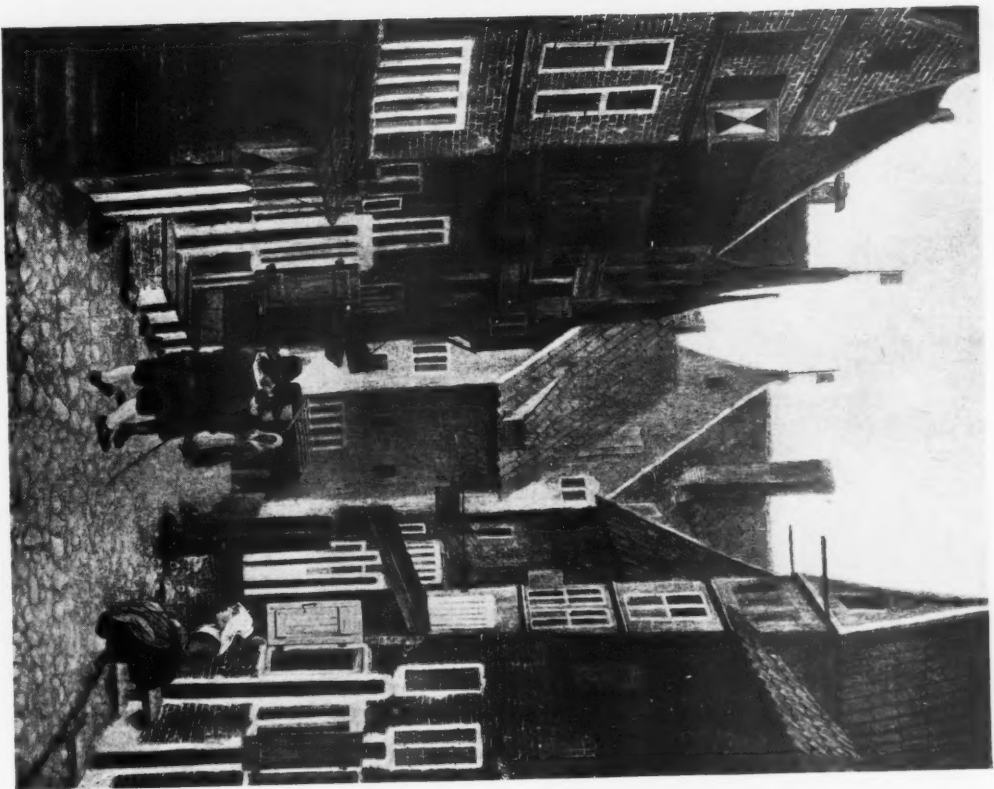
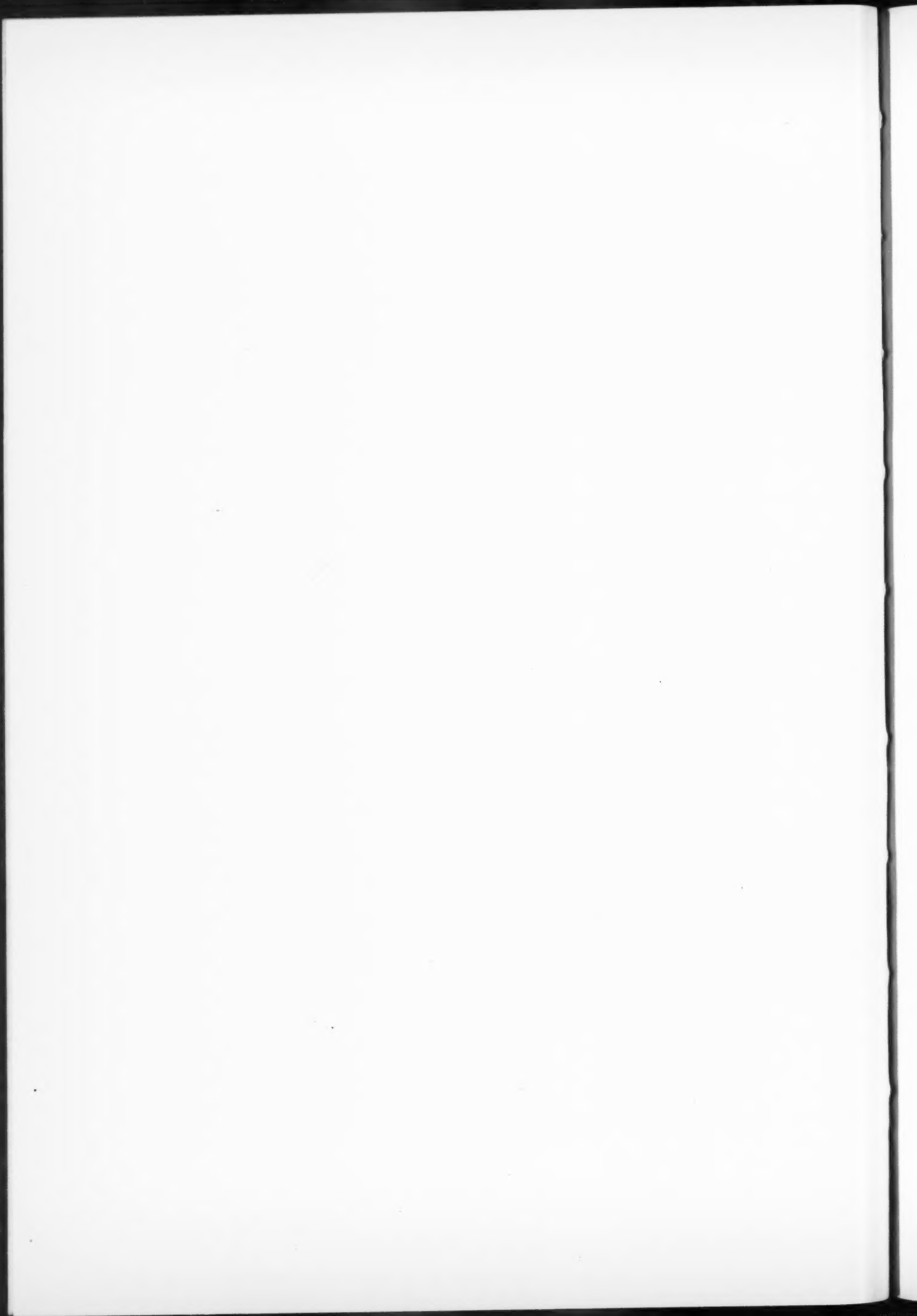


FIG. 6. JACOBUS VREL: STREET SCENE  
*Rijks Museum, Amsterdam*





pictures are full of extraordinary concentrated expression and of a psychological intenseness which reminds us involuntarily of Rembrandt's deeply spiritualized art. Scorning the characterization of space and milieu Crespi limits himself to figures placed on a neutral background. This allows him to concentrate the spectators' attention on the most essential moment of the action unrolling itself on the canvas. The scenes of the Sacraments are imbued with a severe, almost mystical feeling, created by the most delicate effects of light: quivering silvery rays play in innumerable lights on the dark figures painted in greyish and brown tones. The figures in the background seem to dissolve in an atmosphere steeped in the same warm brown tone. Although most of the scenes are conceived as pure genre, the general style of execution is of such a serious character, that they are raised to the level of true religious art, the roots of which lie deeply embedded in the human soul.

Nevermore did Crespi attain the significance of expression which he succeeded in embodying in the cycle of the Seven Sacraments, which occupy a place apart in his oeuvre.<sup>19</sup> Lacking the force to keep at this high level, he consciously passes into the domain of pure genre to return again later on to religious subjects, but executed then in the conventional style of acknowledged official academism, cold and intellectual in form and feeling. The painter's genre compositions belong to the most charming pictures of the settecento. Of small dimensions and extremely graceful they anticipate in many respects the achievements of the French masters of the Rococo. In such pictures as the Dice-players in the Galleria Davia Bargellini, Bologna, the scene in a wine-cellar in the Hermitage, closely related to the foregoing picture (Fig. 15), the Girl looking for a flea in Pisa and in the Uffizi, the Mother with her son in the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum, Berlin (Fig. 16),<sup>20</sup> the Peasant's Family in Budapest — Crespi gives a simple and artless representation of everyday life, often recalling by his sincerity and spontaneity of treatment his younger contemporary — Chardin. In other works as, for instance, the Peasant-girl in the collection of the Duke of Northbrook, London, in two genre-scenes in the Hermitage (Fig. 17, 18) and in the Dance from the collection Khanenko, Kiev (Fig. 19), the painter deals with purely pastoral subjects. Conceiving rustic life in a some-

<sup>19</sup> Only the remarkable picture in Turin, representing St. John Nepomucene confessing the Queen of Bohemia, can be compared to this cycle. Its style betrays the closest analogy with the Dresden series.

<sup>20</sup> On the back of this picture, painted on copper, is an inscription difficult to decipher — Joseph Maria Crespi. Ferdinand Graf (?) van (?) Pleidenberg, 1747, daniva (?) 82 apri . . . . . Spagnolo di bologna.

what affected spirit with a strong erotic by-play, Crespi aims here at the expression of the same emotions, which we find later in the art of Boucher and his followers. During the second and third decade Crespi executed, besides these genre-scenes, several portraits, betraying, if compared with the portraits of the period of transition, a much greater sense of picturesque values. Among them are the self-portrait in the Brera, the family portrait and the remarkable portrait of a hunter executed in a free bold manner, both in the Pinacotheca of Bologna.

The academic elements, hardly playing a part in most of the pictures of the second and third decade, come again into preëminence towards the end of Crespi's life. Thus the latest works of the painter remind us of his earliest ones, which denoted a direct connection with purely academic traditions. Strictly speaking the latter always remained an active component of Crespi's style. At times they became feebler, at times they were hardly traceable, but they never disappeared completely. Classical reminiscences were particularly strong in the religious compositions of the painter, who was able to liberate himself from them only in his small genre pictures. And inasmuch as the academic tradition was the point of departure of the whole artistic evolution of Crespi, who during his long life strove in vain to overcome it, there is nothing illogical in the fact that this tradition once again forces its way to the surface, and this time quite openly, in the works of his old age which speak clearly of the weakening of his creative faculties.<sup>21</sup> In such works as the Martyrdom of St. John the Evangelist, St. Andrew, St. Alexander, and St. Fermo and Rustico in prison visited by an angel in the church of San Paolo d'Argon, Bergamo (1728-29), Joshua arresting the sun in the Capella Colleoni, Bergamo (about 1738) and the Martyrdom of St. Peter of Arbues in the Collegio di Spagna at Bologna (1738-40) one is unpleasantly struck by the lack of sincerity in feeling and by the extremely shallow psychologism expressed by heads thrown back with up-turned eyeballs and by exaggerated gestures. Although the handling remains broad and free as heretofore, a certain languidness appears in the modelling and the uniformity of the types produces a wearisome impression. Very close to these dated pictures stand the Crucifixion in the Brera, Two Saints in the Pinacotheca of Bologna and Christ carrying the Cross in the Ateneo at Pesaro. Here also the stroke remains brilliant and vivacious, but nevertheless does not redeem the works mentioned from empty theatrical pathos. With such feeble pic-

<sup>21</sup> Modigliani (*op. cit.*, pp. 415, 420, 422) is utterly wrong when, refuting Marangoni, he refuses to see signs of decline in the paintings of Crespi's old age.



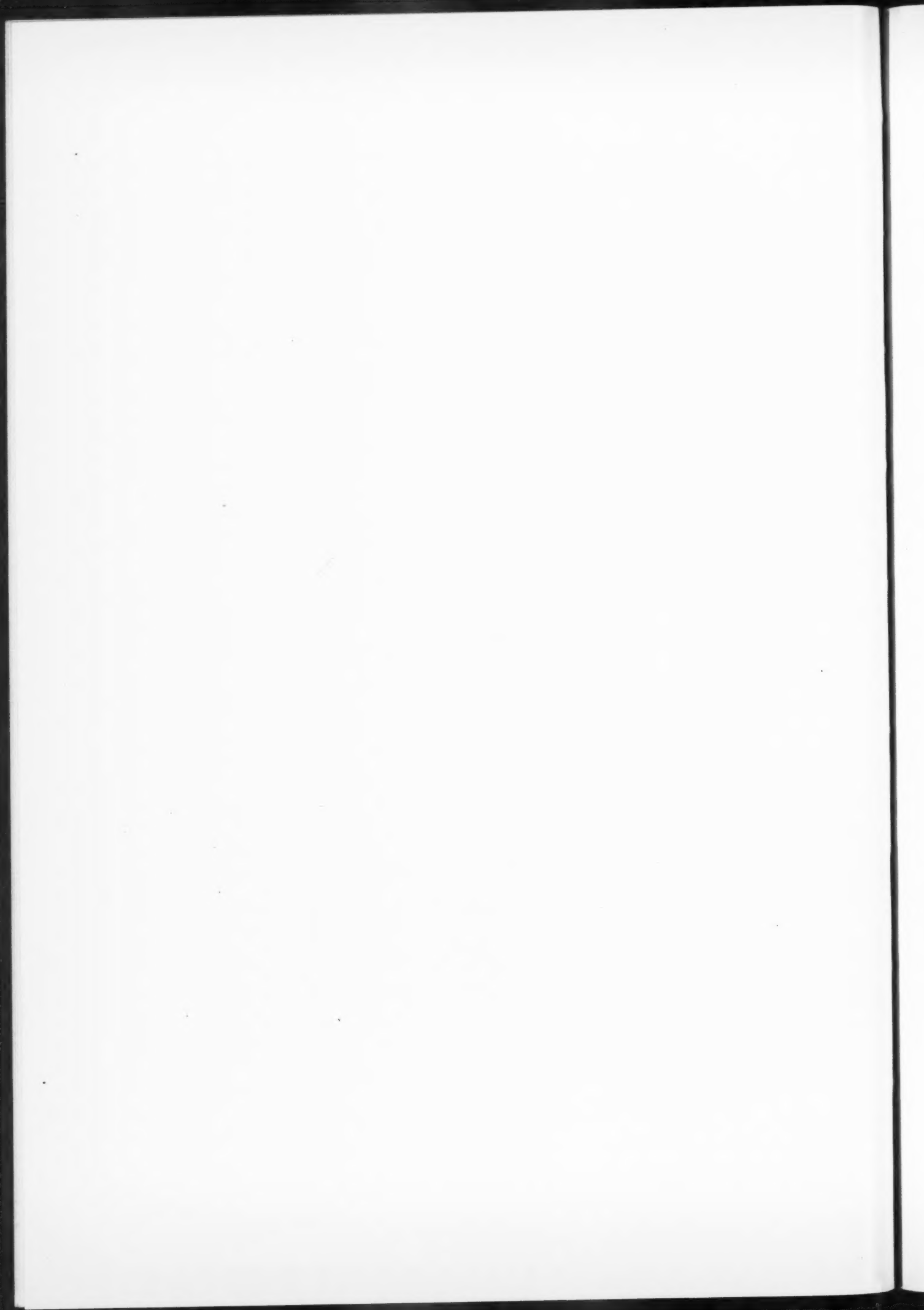
FIG. 15. CRESPI: SCENE IN A WINE-CELLAR  
*Hermitage, Leningrad*



FIG. 17. CRESPI: GENRE-SCENE  
*Hermitage, Leningrad*



FIG. 18. CRESPI: GENRE-SCENE  
*Hermitage, Leningrad*





tures does the master, who gave in the cycle of the Seven Sacraments an instance of the profoundest psychologism, end his career.<sup>22</sup>

Raphael Mengs sees in the art of Giuseppe Maria Crespi the final degeneration of the Bolognese school.<sup>23</sup> This severe judgment has its origin in the classical tastes of Mengs, who saw in Crespi one of the chief infringers of the academic traditions so dear to his heart. On the contrary for us, at the present time, Crespi is perhaps the most attractive figure among the Bolognese painters of the seicento. And if his works do not always duly impress us, it is on no account because of his lack of academism, but for the reason that he was not anti-academic enough. Being endowed by nature with a great picturesque temperament, the painter entered from early youth into painful collision with classical traditions foreign to his nature, which held him his whole life long in their tenacious clutches. The art of Crespi is born of an attempt to conciliate the inheritance of Bolognese academism with diametrically opposed tendencies of purely picturesque order. At times (particularly in his genre compositions) the artist succeeds in throwing off completely the academic fetters. Then he executes his happiest works — spontaneous and convincing in form. The cycle of the Seven Sacraments and several charming pictures on genre subjects were precisely executed by the painter in these happy periods. But in most cases (particularly in his monumental religious compositions) Crespi remains true to the academic tradition which, by a strange irony of fate, he denounced so hotly in his prolonged discussions with the historiographer of the Accademia Clementina — Zanotti. This bond with academism is expressed in a number of standard compositional formulas, inherited by the painter from the preceding generation, in the conven-

<sup>22</sup> Among the pictures ascribed to Crespi the following must be excluded from his oeuvre: St. Joseph and Ecce Homo in Dresden (probably the work of Luigi Crespi); St. Anthony in the Städel Institute at Frankfurt a/M. (Luigi Crespi); a Genre-scene in the Louvre (Pasquale Rossi; see R. Longhi. *Di Gaspare Traversi. Vita Artistica*, N8-9, 1927, p. 166); S. Giovanni Nepomucene in the Pinacotheca of Bologna (Antonio Crespi); St. Frances in the same Gallery (Antonio Crespi); the Flight to Egypt and the Mary's Visitation in the Städel Institute at Frankfurt a/M. (a school work); an Inn in the Pinacotheca of Bologna (the work of an imitator of G. M. Crespi); the Hunter, the Portrait of an unknown man and the Portrait of a Lady in the Galleria Davia-Bargellini in Bologna (Luigi Crespi). The artistic personality of Luigi Crespi, a number of whose altarpieces are preserved in Bologna, is far from being clearly defined. One can at any rate affirm positively that he was quite a good portrait-painter as his portraits of Pietro Franceschi and Ferdinando Gini in the Pinacotheca of Bologna and the fine self-portrait in the Venetian Academy show. Just as obscure is the figure of G. M. Crespi's other son, Antonio, to whose brush belong two pictures in the Pinacotheca of Bologna: S. Francesco di Paolo and an Ecce Homo. There is no doubt that both sons actively assisted their father in his numerous works. Moreover, G. M. Crespi had many pupils, amongst whom Antonio Gionima was a particularly happy imitator of the master's manner.

<sup>23</sup> Lanzi. *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*. Paris, 1824, II, p. 124, IV, p. 417.



tional gestures of his personages, in their purely exterior pathos, in the uniformity of the types, seeming to derive from one model. For all these reasons the master's psychologism has no particular depth, being confined to the narrow limits of the canonic forms based on anti-individualistic idealization. In this respect Crespi was the direct antipode of Rembrandt, whom he strove to emulate, but who in reality always remained foreign to his artistic conception. While with Rembrandt the element of individuality spiritualized to the last degree predominates, in Crespi's art there prevails the normative type, deeply sensualistic in essence. Just as differently did the two artists conceive the problem of light. Rembrandt assumes his figures to be only part of the luminous medium, receiving their existence from the condensed beams of light. In other words there exists for him primarily space but not figures. On the contrary, Crespi's point of departure is the plastic figure, blended with the surrounding space but invariably dominating it. Therefore his light and shade is subordinate to the figures to which it is functionally bound. Hence its heavy hardness, hence also the excessive brightness and exaggeration of the lights called upon to model and outline form. Strictly speaking Crespi's light and shade in principle very slightly differs from the "sfumato" of Leonardo and the sharp light and shade of Caravaggio, which were similarly employed as means to express the plastic nature of the material world. By reason of this originally Italian conception of light and shade Crespi was never able to understand Rembrandt. Only once, in the series of the Seven Sacraments, did he succeed for a moment in approaching Rembrandt's art, but on the whole he passed it by, as was to be expected from a Southerner, who never could assimilate foreign Northern psychics. And such Crespi appears in all his paintings — a typical Italian master. Brilliancy of handling and refined colouring notwithstanding, his works remain essentially the organic product of a profoundly national culture, that did not even at the period when picturesque tendencies reached their height, lose touch with the plastic ideals of the Renaissance, which gave in art the most adequate expression to the Italian's conception of the universe.

#### CORRECTION

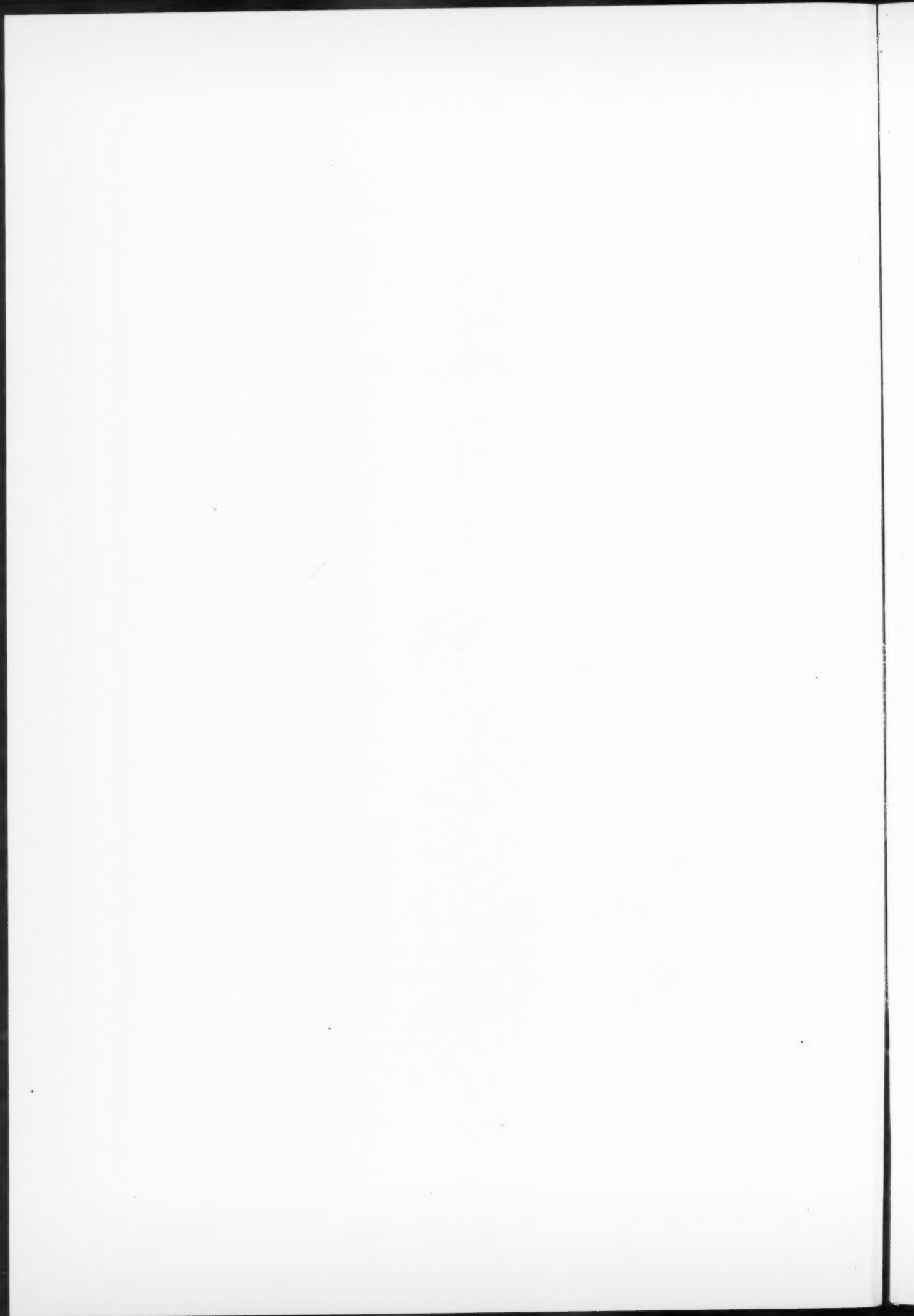
The "Scene in a wine cellar" in the Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow published in the first part of my "Studies" (Fig. 4) as belonging to Giuseppe Maria Crespi, should be erased from the list of his works. It must be ascribed to Giuseppe Gambarini (1680-1725), a younger contemporary of Crespi, who stood under the strongest influence of his art. This is also proved by the Moscow picture, which is closely related in style to Crespi. The first to elucidate Gambarini's artistic personality was Voss in his article "Giuseppe Gambarini. Ein vergessener bolognesischer Genremaler des 18. Jahrhunderts." *Pantheon*, 1928, pp. 512-515.



FIG. 16. CRISPI: MOTHER WITH HER SON  
*Kaiser-Friedrich Museum, Berlin*



FIG. 19. CRISPI: DANCE  
*Collection Kamenko, Kiev*





## GEORGE BELLOWS

BY WALTER GUTMAN

*New York City*

A PAINTER was criticised by another as being "all emotion." While this was not said of George Bellows, it could have been, as it was his trouble and his virtue. It may be convenient, before continuing, to define emotion. It is often opposed to intellect. This is obviously inaccurate, as intellectual effort can be, should be emotional. It is more just to say that there are two sorts of emotion: one for the constructive faculties of the intellect, or whole organism, and the other, an enthusiasm for the phenomena of other parts of nature. George Bellows' emotion was generally of the latter sort: for his pretty and graceful little daughters, his lovely wife, the elders of his family, old men and women, the grace and strength of young bodies at play, the rigours of a stern coast, the capable men who inhabit them, the odors and simple objects of the country, and the clang and vigour of our cities. His attitude was necessarily romantic. He did not look upon people as problems. They excited in him, instead, ideas such as love, gaiety, strength and tenderness of which he made them the symbols. He studied method as much as was necessary for a result, but he was not an explorer nor an acrobat. It is true that he reworked the systems of the Renaissance and studied theories of composition, such as that of Mr. Hambidge, which were based on them, but this was more because of a desire to enjoy their freedom of choice, than to push their learning further. We owe to him no new discovery or accent in color, form or design, though in each of these his manner is personal.

Because he was so little preoccupied with his technique, his work is unusually diverse. He was aroused differently by each subject and was somewhat at the mercy of its significance. One cannot epitomize his work fairly because there is no important artist in whom there is so much that is sentimental or vacuous. On the other hand there has been no American painter who has put the romantic idea with such force. His "work" does not exist. He must be judged by his individual pictures.

As an example of the first, let us take the "Forty-two Kids." Considering the title, of what significance is the number forty-two, especially when there are, as far as I can count, only thirty-one in the picture. I realize that titles are often of no importance, yet in one so specific one

can expect a relation between it and the painting. The word "kids" is the secret. The painting shows young boys naked, diving off the dock, pulling one another in, playing a game, yelling to someone in the water, making funny gestures, no dignity or great beauty seen in their bodies or the scene, nothing but impishness and bravura assisted by a glow of sunlight. Or better still, "Paddy Flannigan," a young ragamuffin with his costume artistically ripped to the waist, leering impertinently, with his hair coming in a cute and pettable bang over his forehead.

For his paintings of insignificance we can take "Granny Ame's House." It shows to one side an L of a white frame house somewhere "up country." Back of it is an outhouse, and in the distance small, flatish hills. For verdure there is a bush of some sort growing in front of a pair of windows. More in the foreground are about a dozen palings of picket fence, painted white. In the foreground are a group of chickens and ducks, apparently unconfined by a run, and at one side their house. Granny Ame's may have been a very thrilling place if one knew it. Possibly one had chicken dinners there on Sundays, and the sight of the potential dishes may have made the initiate's mouth water. But unfortunately this is not conveyed by the painting. All one sees is this rather non-beautiful house, an ill kept lawn, some avaricious fowl and an uninteresting landscape.

But in compensation for these not infrequent lapses in taste or introspection, there are a number of vigorous canvases. The scenes which excited him nobly are many. The river for itself and for its commerce; the city, the organization of its inhabitants and their hardy enjoyment of each moment; sport, children, especially his own; women for their spirits and for their bodies; nature at night, in storm and in sunshine.

For the first let us take "The Bridge, Blackwell's Island." It is painted from the Manhattan shore showing the first span of the Queensborough bridge. Moored or being wharfed are some barges. In the other corner, overlooking, is a terrace through whose fence some children press their faces. In the river are a sailboat and a tug going upstream into the wind, a north wind which blows the smoke sharply out of the funnel.

In a grander mood is "Men of the Docks." Here is seen a large freighter being pushed from its pier. In the foreground are some long-shoremen and a team of horses clearing up. In the background are the buildings of Manhattan. Despite the title, the things least to be noticed are the men and the docks. But the steamer with its huge black and red

bulk and the cheery sprinkle of the white of its superstructure, and the yellow and white and blue of its stack, pushing majestically into the current telling of the sea and the romance we have put into it.

Towards the city, perhaps a more jagged sea, he was equally sympathetic. There are two aspects, itself as a unit, and its people. Of the first is one called "New York." It is difficult to decide about this painting. In some ways it seems too filled with figures, and with blotches of light and shade. In others one cannot resist the wise and cleverly manipulated rhythm, the interesting variety of figures, and the natural yet pictorially used forms. It shows a square at a time of heavy traffic. We see the crowd on the sidewalk walking mostly in one direction, and the traffic of the street, symbolized by a loaded truck and an empty cart and the shadows of automobiles, going in the other. In the midst is a policeman with majestic gesture. Then an open space of the park, bare as it is fall, and back of it looming, the buildings. Quite naturally we feel in this the effort which has built the city and the unrelenting motion which maintains it. And perhaps most of all, the glamour which the sun and the beauties of man and animal cast upon it.

However, the painting which emphasizes the human element of the city is the "Cliff-Dwellers." Of course others, such as Sloan and Luks have painted the crowded parts of New York with much the same mixture of affection and humour. What distinguishes Bellows is his organization and his brightness. With the other artists one feels a casualness: — they saw an incident so they went home and painted it. With Bellows it is apparent that he has composed from a great many. He has chosen an example of each type: — a young mother with a misbehaving youngster, a contemplative West Indian, a sister not unwillingly carrying the latest addition, a veteran mother sitting with her back to the steps enjoying the heat, a house-wife going up the stairs with the groceries; fire-escapes crowded with figures, furniture and linen. He has chosen, too, clothes-lines longer and more gaudily decked than in nature, and he has made his stage triangular with at the apex a building of more aristocratic appearance contrasting gently with the tenements.

There is, perhaps surprisingly for Bellows, no obvious moral sentiment in this painting. There is, as we have mentioned, an unusual amount of painter's organization. Perhaps for this reason the human appeal is more convincing. The various figures exist not as lectures but as beings, not replicas of those we see around us but their expansion. The tenements are too neat, perhaps, but for that reason the hearty life

going on within is not obscured by expostulation, however worthy. It is like the paintings of Breughel, not a description of peasant life, but life seen through them.

It is probable that Bellows is better known by his paintings and lithographs of sport than by any other work. There are, of course, admirable bits of drama and satire in works such as "Sharkey's," "Both Members of this Club," "Introducing John L. Sullivan," "Ringside Seats" and "Dempsey-Firpo," yet I cannot help feeling that the drama he felt was often the obvious one felt by every spectator:— the rush of brute forces, the determination to win, the exhaustion. But as every one knows there is considerable besides these elemental emotions in boxing. Bellows would have been more unique if more of the strategy and thought, the nimbleness of a defence, the craft of an attack, had been seen. In his polo scenes, too, there is an excess of rush and rear, slash and glitter which make his works often but elaborated illustrations of a journalist.

This same melodramatic attitude was often his towards nature, but happily refined. The drama is not unusual, swirling clouds, massive, dark rocks against a green sea, a sudden burst of sun upon a pasture, night, slightly misted, illumined from the sky and street, but at the same time they appear to be the unfostered reactions of the artist. A good example of this is the "Approach to the Bridge at Night." Here we see the long plaza, to one side a clump of houses, rising over and beyond them the ramp and the first tower of the bridge. The moon shows through and on the clouds. Street lights and those of the stores splotch the pavement. On the empty street all that can be seen moving are two carts, one pulled by white horses and the other half disappeared.

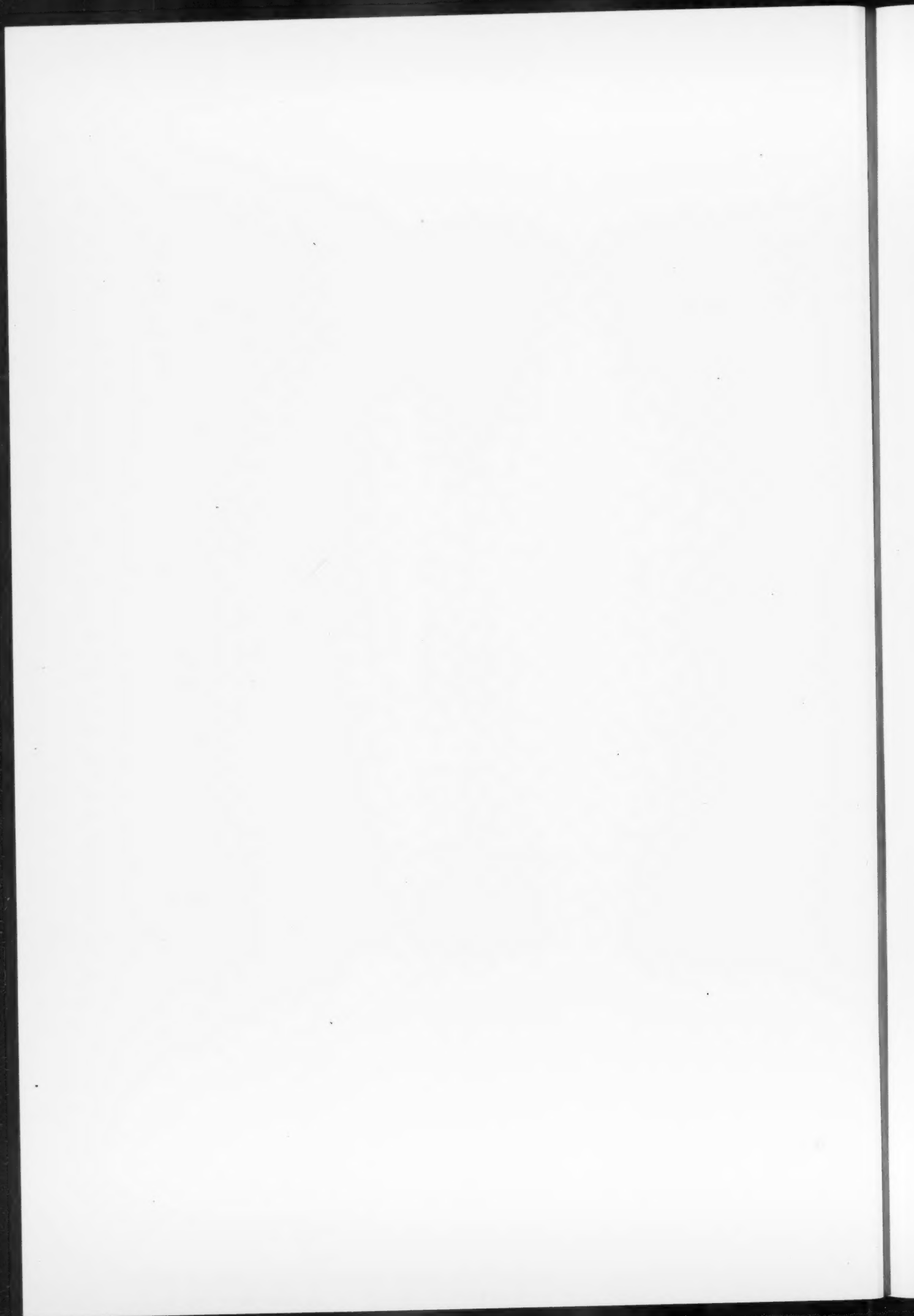
Nature was to him, however, not always melodramatic as "Blue-Snow," "The Battery," and "The Tenement" will show. The latter picture again uses a span of a bridge, its mass and height emphasized by the thin tenement beneath it. In the middle ground is the river: in it a tug pushing a barge, its smoke rising into the air. Beyond it are the low shores of Long Island. Beneath the bridge some boys are playing, while near its pier a horse truck passes. Beyond the tenement are open lots, and in the distance a large smokestack and some high buildings. Through the firm lines of the bridge and the fragile tenement, the rose brown where the sun strikes the buildings and the green brown in the shadows, the gray-blue river, the bare, tall trees and the playing children, one is impressed by a firmness of architecture and a gaiety of life whose sum is peacefulness.

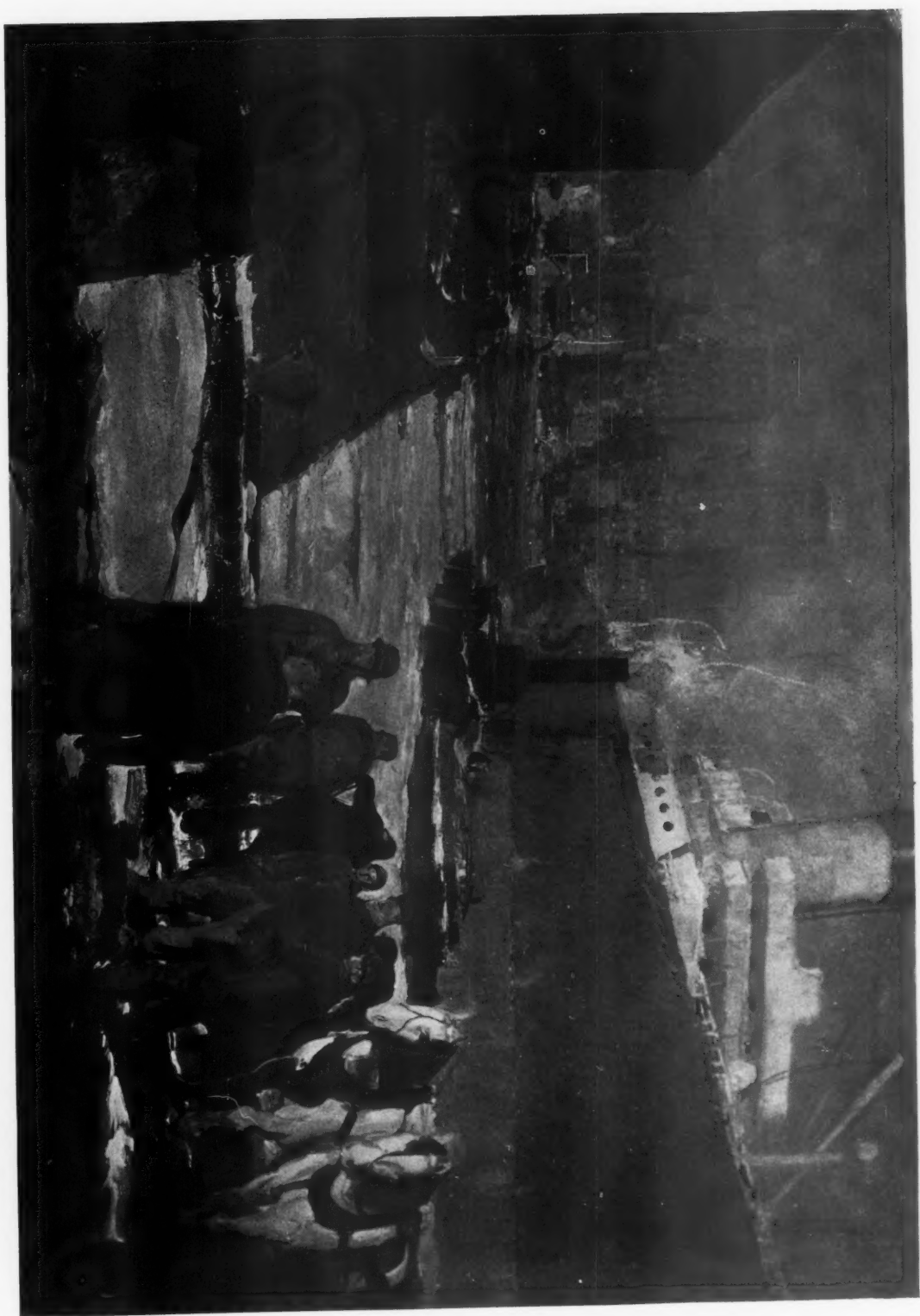




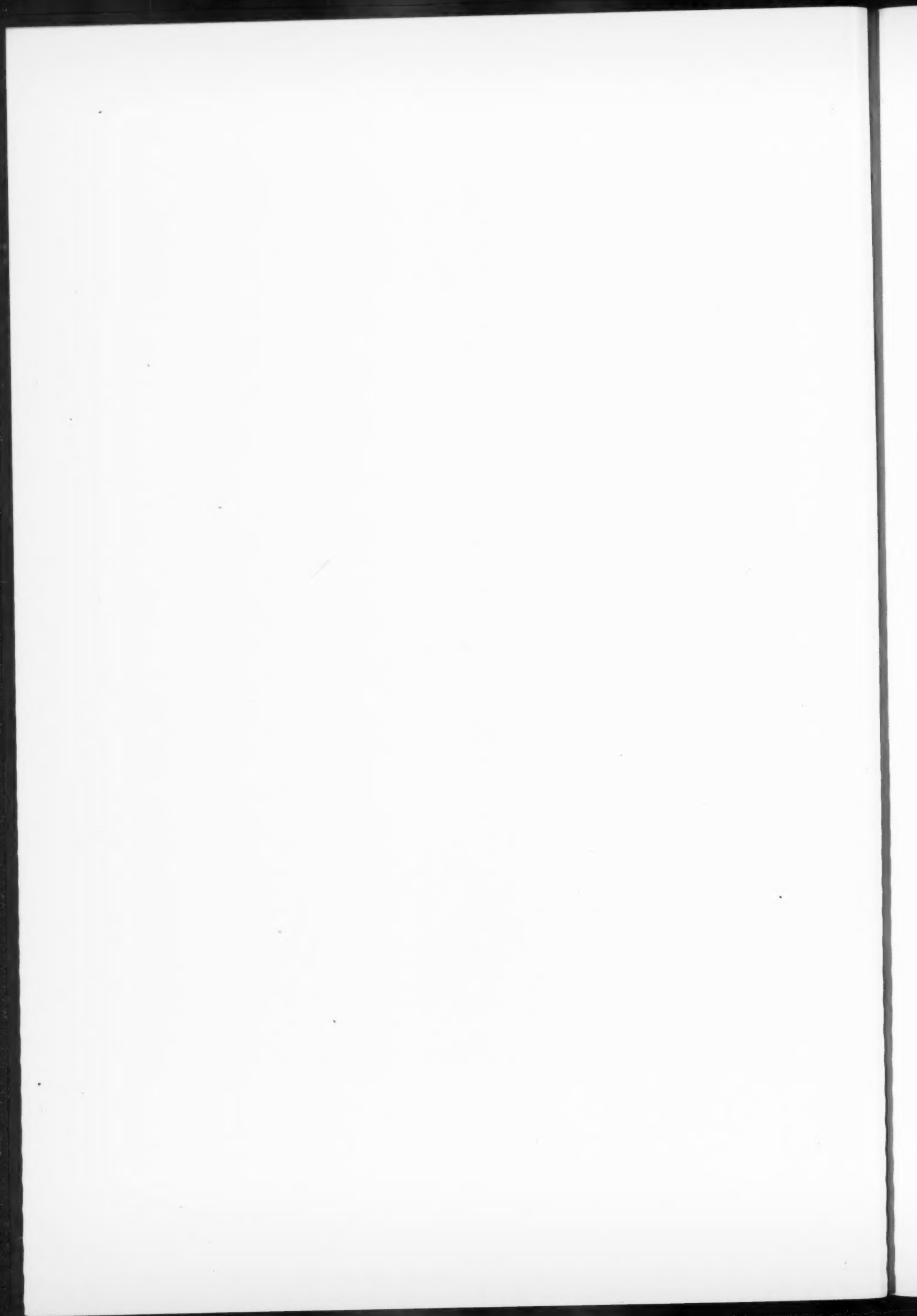
PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST'S MOTHER, 1919  
*By George Bellows*







MEN OF THE DOCKS, 1912  
*By George Bellows*



Almost as well as his sport pictures, he is known for his children. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries a tradition was established in which children became actors in a perpetual masque for the benefit of the grown-ups. To this Bellows usually adheres. One cannot dislike it. The fat, roly-poly, or small and wistful faces, the bright gowns, the bashful manners. However, occasionally, as in the early painting called "The Cross Eyed Boy," or in "Lady Jean," or in the landscape with figures, "Jean, Anne and Joseph," one feels a greater interest in the figures for the joy of painting, less crooning by the artist over his emotions, and consequently a greater independence in the figures themselves.

It is in his treatment of women that Bellows seems to me the strongest. Perhaps because their bodies and spirit freed him of the need to sentimentalize. In any case his understanding is more subtle and his treatment more inspired. In quality there can be seen little change from his "Standing Nude" of 1906 to his "Venus" of 1924. The first is done in the low key popular at that time, a green-brown ground and a yellow flesh. The model is quite ugly. A round stomach, a flat chest, a slight curvature of the spine, a large, flat nose, heavy cheeks, a thin jaw. Yet so scholarly has she been modeled, with care to understand the various planes and reticence in expressing them, and with such instinctive and unexploited sympathy has her nature been romanced, that the painting appears to me to be a truly fine work, one of the best which Bellows produced and comparable to a great master's.

The second painting, somewhat less passionate, is more learned and equally thoughtful. It shows a woman propped up upon a couch, one leg lying along it, the other crossed and held somewhat rigidly above. The painting presents many problems:— the patch work quilt on which she is seated, the flowered wall paper, the net curtains, and the sunlight coming through the boards of the closed shutters. And again the problem of making these homely objects fit in with the formal arrangement of her body. In some way this has been done. One does not feel, as one does in many modern paintings, a desperate effort to read beauty into objects simply because they are contemporary. He seems to have taken them naively as the old masters did as the most beautiful he had, without searching for the reason. And he has read a calm, classic beauty into the woman herself. He has found it in the curve of her breasts, in the hard outline of her neck and arms, in the fullness of her stomach and the richness of her legs, through the deep appeal they had for him and not

through the selfish and hypercritical appeal of the music halls. Out of these he has made an arabesque:—the sharp lines of the elbows, the round form of the head, the severity and fullness of the chest and breasts and the firm and soft lines of the stomach, and the grand forms of the legs, one calm the other alert.

If, as we have said and tried to show, Bellows greatest gift was his rapid and wholesome reaction to life around him, it would be unfair not to give tribute to the structure which bore it. If he was not a great student of his medium, he was at least a well versed craftsman. His composition is almost always successful, the main object seen first, the secondary being appropriate in type and placement. It is true that it is somewhat obvious. A tall vase with tall, slender flowers carries out the figure of Lady Jean; a chair and a window fill one side, a highboy the other. A student could hardly learn from him what he could not learn better from Bellows' sources, the old masters.

He did not, it seems to me, know how to use color. Or perhaps he forgot. In his earlier period he was naturalistic and got some charming notes, as in "The Tenement" of gray-blue, rose, and green-brown. Later, becoming more learned and dramatic he tended to obscure his emotion. And he developed too at times a crystalline manner, like frosted candy which to me is hideous.

He was not, of course, a master of abstract form, but he was a grand, if not over-sensitive draughtsman. For this reason the sensation of color, which his paintings lack, is found at times with stupendous force in his drawings and lithographs. In the last he had no rival, technically, among his contemporaries, and no superior at any time.

#### A CORRECTION

Owing to a regrettable misunderstanding on the part of Mr. Heil the large Cowper "Madonna" by Raphael, published in the last number, was given to the Hon. Andrew W. Mellon whereas it is actually the property of the distinguished connoisseur Sir Joseph Duveen.



